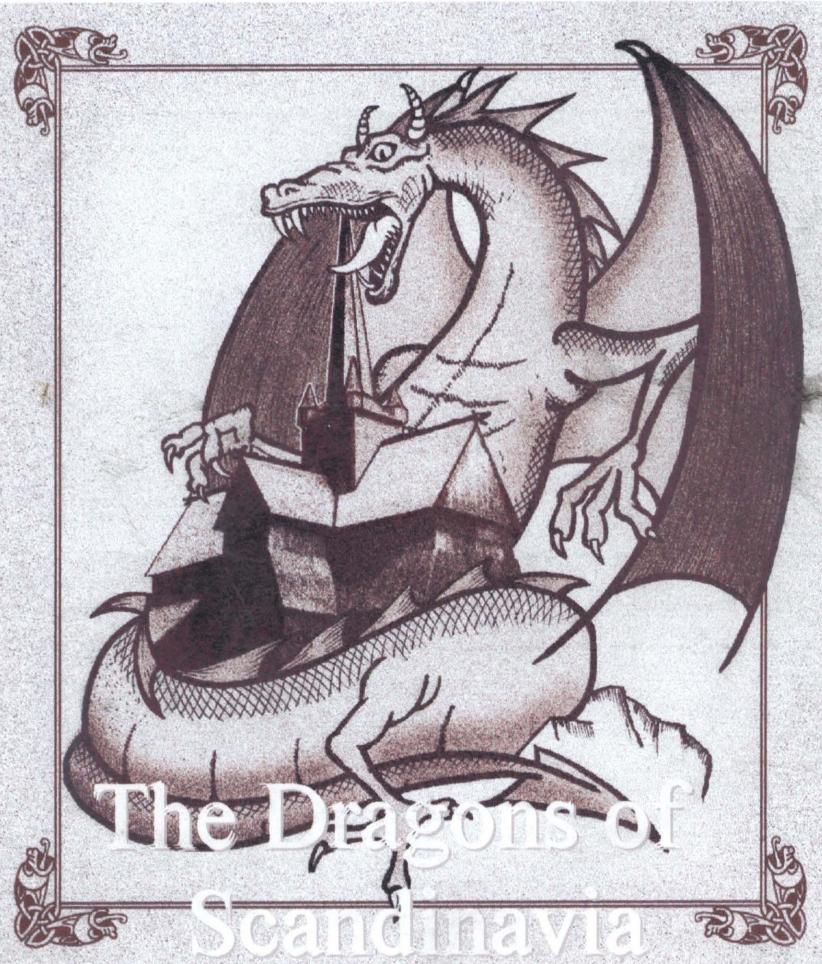


# ANIMALS & MEN



THE JOURNAL OF THE CENTRE FOR FORTEAN ZOOLOGY



## The Dragons of Scandinavia

American Anomalies; Man-eating Crocodiles in the News; Giant Squids; Blashford-Snell Expedition Reports and much more

Issue Thirty

£2.50

# *Animals & Men* #30

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# Animals & Men #30



# EDITORIAL

jonathan downes



Dear Friends,

Welcome to another issue of the world's only dedicated cryptozoological magazine. Some of you might be somewhat puzzled to be receiving issue thirty so soon after issue twenty-nine was published. We have gone to press with this issue so soon after the last one for a number of reasons. Firstly, because there were so many technical problems with the last issue that it was ridiculously late. Secondly, because we always try to have a new issue available in time for the *Fortean Times* Unconvention, and thirdly because there simply is so much happening in the world of fortean zoology that if we didn't do our best to keep up with our publishing schedule we would soon be bogged down under the weight of it all.

For the second issue running we have managed to put out a sixty-page magazine. I am hoping that we shall be able to sustain this indefinitely. Touch wood ... the technical problems that so beset the last issue seem to have been ironed out and I think that the production on this one will go according to plan.

We need to proffer an apology at this point. 34 readers will have had a demand from the Post Office for an extra 92p postage due on the last issue. I am very sorry about this. We do a mass mail out of 300 magazines and unfortunately the person doing the posting (I will spare his blushes and keep him anonymous), managed to make what is technically called a cock up and put an ordinary second class stamp on these envelopes rather than the proper tariff. Sorreeeeeeeeeeeee.

On a more important matter: Plans are well afoot now for the CFZ to relocate to a rural location in either North Devon or North Cornwall where – with the aid of grant money from both the lottery fund and the EU – we hope to open a full time visitor's centre. If this comes to pass it will be the only tourist attraction of its type in the world. For those of you interested, the draft proposal for the centre can be found online at [www.monsterworld.da.ru](http://www.monsterworld.da.ru). Feedback will be gratefully appreciated. Thank you to all of you for continuing to support us. Here is to bigger and better things in the future.

Onwards and Upwards...  
Jon Downes

*The great days of zoology  
are not done.....*

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# 2003



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# *Animals & Men #30*



edited and compiled by jon and richard



## NANDI BEAR SCARE?

Events in the East African country of Malawi took a strange turn over the last few months as the country was gripped, first by accounts of a 'vampire', and then by fear of a creature that sounds suspiciously like the Nandi Bear. Two days before Christmas the BBC reported that: "Rumours of people being attacked for their blood have swept southern areas of Malawi. Terrified villagers have left their fields untended, too scared of becoming the next victims of the mysterious blood-suckers." The Government took these scares seriously enough for President Bakili Muluzi to make an official announcement in which he claimed that the rumours were a plot to undermine the government.

One man thought to be a human vampire was killed and three others were seriously injured. A number of victims - mainly women and children - came forward. One woman showed journalists a mark on her arm where she said a needle was inserted to

draw her blood. The alleged attacks were reported in Blantyre as well as the districts of Thyolo, Mulanje and Chiradzulu. In Thyolo, three Roman Catholic priests were attacked and badly beaten before being recognised.

On the 10<sup>th</sup> January the story took an even more bizarre twist when according to Reuters Blantyre Urban Governor Eric Chiwaya, a member of the ruling United Democratic Front, was hounded from his house by a bloodthirsty mob who were convinced that the country's government was colluding with vampires to collect human blood for international aid agencies.



Then in early March events took a decidedly cryptozoological bent when according to BBC reporters at least three people were killed and 16 others severely injured by a mysterious wild beast running wild in a mountainous region of the country. Parks and Wildlife Officer Leonard Sefu claimed that the mysterious beast could be a rabid hyena but said it was strange for a hyena to terrorise whole villages without being cornered. Two old women and a three-year-old baby died when the beast crushed their skulls and ate their intestines and private parts. Some of the villagers who survived who survived were completely maimed and disfigured, losing both legs and hands while two have lost both ears and eyes to the beast.

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The predations of the beast go back at least as far as August 2002 when a mystery beast killed five people and maimed over 20 others before game rangers and para-military police managed to gun it down. Parks and Wildlife officials identified the slain beast as a rabid hyena but residents disputed this, saying hyenas normally have shorter hind limbs.

In the wake of these attacks at least 4,000 people left four villages in the central Dowa district, some 100 km from the capital Lilongwe.

## FACT FILE: THE NANDI BEAR

- The Nandi bear is also known as the chemosit.
- It is said to relish the human brain over any other body part.
- Warriors who will brave the fiercest lion will not enter forests were the Nandi bear is said to live.
- Natives often don protective helmets when they think the monster is abroad, to shield their skulls from its crushing jaws.
- Giant baboons, out of place chimpanzees, rogue hyenas, and even an unknown species of African bear have been touted as possible identities of the Nandi bear.
- The only known African bear was a small sub-species of brown bear that inhabited the Atlas mountains of north Africa.
- Zoologists are unsure why bears have never colonised sub Saharan Africa.

## SUPER BEAST 47

The Australian News Service were the first to announce the discovery of a new species of European bat which was discovered in 2001 in the south east of France. Research conducted since Philippe Favre's discovery has confirmed the presence of the new species, which has been named the Alpine Long-Eared Bat in most mountainous regions of Europe at altitudes of more than 1,000 metres, including the Balkans.

The discovery of the new species is somewhat of interest to Forteans because it was found after M. Favre accidentally discovered the bat when he hit one with his car, on August 24<sup>th</sup> 2001, while traveling to Ristolas to take inventory of the different species living in the Queyras regional nature preserve. Genetic tests proved that it was a new species which has been named *Plecotus alpinus*.

## ARACHNID AVALANCHE

On 21<sup>st</sup> March Australian newspapers reported that Thirty-four new spider species have been discovered on North Stradbroke Island off the coast of Queensland. 148 other species were also found that are still being studied and may well be new species.

The most exciting of these new discoveries was a new genus of sac spider (proposed name is *Pseudoanypshaena michaelrixii*) This is the first of its subfamily known from Australia - the closest relative of the new genus is from Chile.



## PENNYSYLVANIAN PRIMATES

In the last issue we commented how in the wake of the death of Ray Wallace the world's media had proudly proclaimed that 'Bigfoot is Dead', and how it was

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almost as if the phenomenon was redoubling its efforts to prove them wrong. The upwards trend in Bigfoot reports seems to be continuing apace. For example, the Blairsville Dispatch, of Blairsville, PA, announced on January 31, 2003 that "Bigfoot is Back, Baby!"

There were two sightings in a heavily wooded area of Derry Township. On Sept. 27 as a driver was manoeuvring on a back road. "*Hearing a noise in the woods, the driver stopped, thinking some deer were approaching. At a distance of about 145 feet, the man saw a tall-human-like creature covered with long brown hair and arms that hung down to his knees. The creature was estimated to be eight feet tall and took long steps as it crossed a field.*"

*The driver watched as the creature crossed over a barbed wire fence with no hesitation or break in stride. Gordon later measured the fence as 44 inches off the ground.*"

A series of what appear to be Sasquatch tracks were reported in Adams County. The prints were about 16 inches long and eight inches wide and were reported around a reservoir about 1,000 feet in diameter.

The same newspaper story also mentioned a brief sighting of two enormous birds seen landing in a tree in Wyoming County in late June. They were so heavy that they threatened to snap off the tree limbs. Their wingspan was estimated at 12 feet.

Two weeks later, the same newspaper printed a follow up story. Eric Altman of Jeannette, director of the Pennsylvania Bigfoot Society, claimed that anomalous footprints were also found in November 2002 and January this year. Altman wrote, "*The first set of footprints measured 14 x 8 inches and the ones found on Jan 11, 2002 measured almost 18 inches long.*"

## I HAVE NEVER DONE IT LIKE THIS BEFORE

Meanwhile in Florida various news agencies reported in mid February that parts of the Everglades were being terrorised by an exhibitionist

skunk ape. David Shealy claims that a "skunk ape" recently flashed his genitals at two Swedish women who were fishing near a river.

Fortean literature is full of accounts which suggest that various BHMs are attracted to menstruating women, but although folklore across the world tells of sexual encounters between humans and unknown primates there seems to be very little hard evidence (if you will pardon the pun).

Those who know the editorial team best will be very proud of us for not making any overt jokes about Swedish blue movies at this point.

## THE SIN OF SLOTH

In the rainforests of Argentina there were a series of sightings of "a hairy hominid" described as a "2-meter (6 feet, 6 inches) tall biped, with a hairy body, long arms and ears, and fierce carnivorous habits." On the 12<sup>th</sup> March *UFO Roundup* carried an article partly written by our old friend Dr. Virgilio Sanchez Ocejo which claimed that "some 15 mounted rangers, 12 members of the Ciudad Termal Volunteer Fire Brigade," plus local media personnel," was in search of the mystery beast under the command of Sheriff Rene Tacacho and Jose Exequiel Alvarez, commander of the Volunteer Fire Brigade and the Juan Carlos Rivas Archaeological and Paleontological Research Group.

The search team is reported to have heard strange howls and found prints that they believe are supportive evidence. They also heard the crackling sound of something walking over leaves and saw a silhouette which vanished quickly into the dense vegetation. The creature is also alleged to have been responsible for the disappearance of one of the guard dogs which accompanied the expedition.

One of the sightings which sparked off this investigation appeared in the Febraruay 28<sup>th</sup> edition of *El Tribuno Digital*.

Patricio Saldaño, is the custodian of the municipal garbage dump, at Salta. On February 26 he was alerted by the barking of "his 30 hounds". He ran outside.

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"I couldn't believe it. Less than 10 metres away was that strange hairy animal that people have reported, standing on two legs. It was like an enormous monkey. It made no noise--it just looked at me fixedly with his red eyes and every so often moved his powerful arms to frighten my dogs, who were harrassing it but not attacking. The beast, belonging to a species that I had never seen in books, had nails as long as daggers, which shined in the light."

There had been other similar incidents in the same area and it had even been claimed that the animal – whatever it was – had been responsible for killing and partially eating a colt.

The CFZ are of the opinion that Sr Saldaño was lucky enough to witness a *mapinguari* – an animal that some people believe to be an unknown species of higher primate, but which following research by David Oren the smart money is bet on it being a surviving mylodontid ground sloth.

The sickle shaped claws are diagnostic of it being an edentate and would have evolved for ripping down vegetation as well as self defence.

The CFZ believe that the killing of the colt and the other incidents alluded to in the various news reports are coincidental and have nothing actually to do with the appearance in the region of a rare and elusive survivor from the Pleistocene.

This is a scenario which happens again and again within fortean zoology – most notably amongst ABC reports when farmers who see the creatures immediately blame them for attacks on their livestock which usually are the work of dogs or animals which died of natural causes then being eaten by secondary predators.

## SHADOW OUT OF TIME

The UFO Update newsletter cited above also reported sightings of a BHM in Chile.

On Sunday, February 23, 2003, two brothers, "Francisco and Jose Carrizo, reported seeing a strange humanoid creature as they were coming

home in Calama," a small city in northern Chile. According to the Carrizo brothers, "the creature was dark, and it looked more like a humanoid shadow rather than a humanoid being."

They described what they saw:

"It was on top of the roof. It made a loud noise when it dropped to the lower roof. Our mother was very frightened because she had been listening to it running around on the roof for a few minutes before we arrived."

The description rings a number of bells with Jon. In the last issue we described the CFZ expedition to Bolam Lake in Northumberland where – much to everyone's surprise – Jon was one of a number of people who saw a man-shaped shadow running through the woods.

Unlike Northumberland, however, the Chilean incident took place in an area which has recently been plagued by a spate of animal mutilations, and it seems quite possible that the two phenomena are interlinked. In the 2003 Yearbook we investigate links between animal mutilations, BHM reports and UFO sightings in Argentina and it appears that this is an extension of those incidents.

In the same area, coal miner Luis Sepulveda saw another strange creature on November 28, last year.

This incident is also very reminiscent of the CFZ's experience at Bolam Lake. Sr. Sepulveda and his co-workers were preparing their tools and mining equipment before going to a mine known as La Banda, located about 40 metres (130 feet) from the Rio Loa..

He was answering a call of nature in the woods when he "saw what appeared to be a small tree moving from side to side, as if the wind was hitting it. But then I realized that there was no wind at all. Therefore, the tree shouldn't have been moving.

I decided to turn around to take a better look at it, but what I saw was so eerie and bizarre that I think I will never forget it.

It was no tree at all. It was a dark hairy creature mimicking a tree, with its arms wide open and moving its upper body from side to side just like trees do"

## LAKE AND SEA MONSTERS

### HERRING AID

Regular readers of this magazine will recall our adventures around the town of Skinningrove where the phrase being an "animal lover" takes on a whole new meaning. The town entered the fortean zoological history books again on the 21<sup>st</sup> February when according to *The Times* Online and various other sources, a 12ft long Oarfish (*Reineleucus glesne*) or "king of Herrings" was accidentally caught by an angler.

Val Fletcher took 40 minutes to reel in the "10 stone monster". She was quoted in *The Sun* as saying: "I only went out to catch a cod'. I was gobsmacked when the fish was lying in front of us, it looked like a prehistoric monster".

It was our friend and colleague Dave Curtis who emailed us with a string of profanities to point out the amazing lexilink in the story. Ms Fletcher had been fishing along with her boyfriend Robert Herrings. Weird old world isn't it?

### TURKISH DELIGHT



We are indebted to Loren Coleman for the story of an unidentified carcass that was been found on the coast of the Marmara Sea, Tekirdag, Turkey. The story appeared in the *Sabah* newspaper on 26th February 2003, under the headline: "Mystery came out of the sea":

*"Fishermen of Sarkoy, Tekirdag were surprised when they caught a giant 'fish' at the height of 2.5 meters and at the weight of 1500 kilos. The local people queued to take a shot of the fish with cameras, as the amazed fishermen tried to identify it. They described the animal as 'tray-shaped', and told that it had a very small mouth. Fisherman Huseyin Karayel said: 'I have been fishing in Marmara Sea for 40 years, but I have never seen anything like that.'*

Independently, various cryptopundits across the web (including us and Matt Bille) identified it as a sunfish.

This was not the only sunfish in the news recently.

A juvenile southern ocean sunfish (*Mola ramsayi*) weighing 54 kg was found by a ranger at Black Point station, in Gurig National Park, about 200km north-east of Darwin. They usually inhabit the southern part of Australia, from Geographe Bay in Western Australia to Coffs Harbour in New South Wales and are also found in Tasmanian waters and other areas of the southern Pacific Ocean. Adults can grow up to three metres in length and weigh more than 2000 kg.

Dr Helen Larson, curator of fishes at the NT Museum, had no idea how the fish had arrived in northern Australian waters. "It certainly hasn't starved to death. Parasites in the gills could have killed it but we won't know that for sure until we get the results of a DNA tissue test." A cast has been taken of the body, which is being preserved in alcohol for a museum exhibit. Many scientists believe that the study of such out of place creatures provides valuable supportive evidence for global warming and other changing climate trends.

The same day as the Turkish Carcass story broke, *The Gulf Times* reported on the story of another mysterious carcass which had been washed up – this time in Dubai. The creature, which had initially been described as a 'crocodile', turned out to be a decomposing dolphin.

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## LUX INTERIOR

The *Winnipeg Sun* on March 10, 2003 admitted that Manipogo (the beast of Lake Manitoba) remains a mystery after an ice-fishing derby on Lake Manitoba that boasted a \$1-million prize for the capture of the famous beast was delayed due to frigid weather conditions.

"We're still hunting for him," joked organizer Louis Allain. "I guess we still have a good month of winter coming up so we'll organize it for another weekend."

The same day *The Inverness Courier* reported a revealing statement from bookmakers William Hill who put up an annual award for the best sighting of the Loch Ness Monster.

This is the first time since the award was introduced in 1990 judges have decided not to make an award, although there have been years when no entries were made. William Hill spokesman Graham Sharpe explained:

*"In the past few years, the standards have been so high that it is now only likely that the judges will take 'hard' evidence as proof of a sighting at the loch."*

The newspaper proved that they were braver than the editorial team at *Animals & Men* who only hinted that the pictures printed by a national newspaper last year were crude forgeries.

*"Only three apparent Nessie sightings were made in 2002, and other than a set of photographs dismissed as a hoax, no video or photographic footage was taken."*

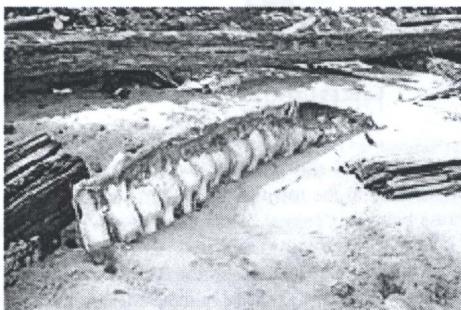
Yah Boo Sucks.

### TALE OF A WHALE TAIL

We are again indebted to Loren Coleman for the following story, posted on BruneiDirect.com on February 18, 2002. It again involves the discovery

of part of an unidentified skeleton. A Security Guard had been patrolling a beach at Lumut when:

*"we were hit by the overwhelming odour of carcass. We discovered that it came from the skeletal remains of a huge unknown creature."*



Some flesh could still be seen on the remains, which resembled the tail of the creature. There were still other small joint skeletal remains scattered about five feet away from each other but no one was able to make out what the creature was.

Richard Freeman of the CFZ is of the opinion that it is some sort of cetacean and although Jon reckons it is the tail of a crocodile he knows better than to argue with Richard, especially late in the evening!

### ANOTHER CRYPTID BITES THE DUST

Several months ago, *Fortean Times* reported the exciting news that an enormous unknown animal had been reported in Ogston Reservoir in Derbyshire. Cryptozoologists were understandably very excited by this, and one, Steve Feltham – the man most famous for having left his suburban home in Dorset to spend his life living in a converted library van on the shores of Loch Ness – christened it "Oggy". Sadly, however, we can exclusively reveal that the whole affair was a hoax. Investigators from the Centre for Fortean

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Zoology telephoned the people who had made the original report on the Ogsten Reservoir web site to be greeted with hails of laughter. It turned out that a number of members of the local birdwatching club had been playing an elaborate game with each other and had concocted a plot which would not have been out of place in an episode of the 'X Files'. "We never believed for one minute that anyone would take this seriously" said a spokesman, "It was just a silly game between us".

## OY VEY MY FISH ALREADY

One of the strangest stories to turn up in the world of fish over recent months concerns members of the Skver sect of Hasidic Jews who apparently believe that people can be reincarnated as fish. Zalmen Rosen, claims that a fellow fishmonger was about to kill a carp to be made into gefilte fish in New York's New Square Fish Market when it began shouting in Hebrew.

"*It said 'Tzaruch shemirah' and 'Hasof bah'*," Mr Rosen later told the *New York Times* newspaper. In Hebrew this apparently means that "everyone needs to account for themselves because the end is nigh."

His colleague was apparently so shocked by the death of the talking fish that he fell into a stack of slimy packing crates, before running in panic to the shop entrance and grabbing Mr Rosen, shouting: "*The fish is talking!*" However his co-worker reacted with disbelief. The fish then identified itself as the soul of a local Hasidic man who had died the previous year, and instructed Rosen to pray and study the Torah, but Mr Rosen admitted later that in a state of panic he attempted to kill the fish, injuring himself in the process and ending up in hospital. The fish was eventually killed and sold.

## THANK HEAVENS FOR LITTLE COILS

An unusual British Sea-monster report comes from the murky depths of Milford Haven Docks. The staff of the Shipwright pub say they saw a 60-foot snake-like creature wriggling its way past the gun tower and have offered a £150 reward for anyone brave enough to land the beast alive. We believe that it

might be a rare encounter with one of a group of giant anguilliform creatures described by Heuvelmans as "Super Eels" and which – to date – remain unclassified by mainstream science. However, local diving enthusiasts have a more prosaic explanation.

Len Bateman of 'Dive Pembrokeshire', who was leading a group of divers in the docks had an encounter with a mysterious animal that lunchtime. "It turned out to be a dolphin," said his wife. "In all his time diving Len has never seen a dolphin that far in the haven. There are rarely single ones as well as they are usually in schools. Is this the Monster of the Haven we wonder?"

Ron Watts, honorary curator of the gun tower museum, has another theory." There is a capsized, submerged rowing boat out there. When the ferry came in on the low tide, its bow thrusters and side thrusters would have pushed the rowing boat towards Port of Pembroke. It would have passed the gun tower by a few yards. When the ferry went out again after the tide turned, her bow props and starboard thrusters would have dislodged anything trapped in that area and sent it back out into the haven."

It is hard to see how either an upturned boat or a dolphin could be mistaken for a snake-like monster. The CFZ are currently investigating the case.



## THE TOOTH IS OUT THERE

The discovery, off the coast of Greenland, of a fish found only in the icy waters of the sub-Antarctic has provoked a remarkable theory that large fish can take advantage of very deep, cold ocean waters to cross the tropics from one polar region to the other, swimming under warm water in which they ordinarily could not survive.

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The Patagonian toothfish (*Dissostichus eleginoides*) can grow to 6.7 feet (2 metres) long and live to 50 years old. The specimen found off of Greenland was 5.9 feet (1.8 metres), mature, and weighed an estimated 154 pounds (70 kilograms). These fish live a long time and grow very slowly, so one can assume that the specimen that was caught by a commercial halibut fisherman off the coast of western Greenland, was quite elderly.

The fisherman was unable to identify the creature – commonly known as Chilean sea bass and served as a delicacy at restaurants in the U.S., Europe, and Asia – so he froze it and took it ashore. The specimen eventually made its way to the desk of Peter Rask Møller, a zoologist at the University of Copenhagen in Denmark. Scientists are at a loss to explain why and how the fish ended up at the opposite end of the world. The most prosaic explanation is that as Patagonian toothfish are known to make very long migrations around the sub-Antarctic circle, perhaps this one just ended up in the wrong current.

However, a more exciting suggestion is that it had migrated intentionally. "To find a Chilean sea bass in northern Arctic is certainly a novel find," said Thomas Hilbish, a professor of biological sciences at the State University of New York at Stony Brook. "It does strongly suggest there is some sort of route for trans-equatorial migration."

Many marine animals – the most well known being humpbacked whales and great white sharks - have what are described as anti-tropical distribution patterns, meaning that the same species has separated populations on either side of the equator. "The present catch of a strictly southern hemisphere deep-water fish supports an old and widely accepted theory that today's anti-tropical distribution pattern is a result of earlier migration through the warm tropics," said Møller.

"It really is a great mystery as to how some of these cold water species can migrate across the tropics," said Hilbish. "There has been a vigorous debate about the routes and mechanisms species like this would have."

Patagonian toothfish prefer water temperatures that

range from 36 to 52 degrees Fahrenheit (2 to 11 degrees Celsius), and occur at depths up to 9,843 feet (3,000 meters). Møller and his colleagues suggest that the discovery of an Antarctic species off the coast of Greenland is a strong indication that fish can and do migrate across tropical waters, which at depths below 3,300 feet (1000 meters) cool off to 50 degrees Fahrenheit (10°C) and may be even cooler the further down you go.

*"We know that large toothfish tend to stay in greater depths than smaller ones, so it could be expected that the straying specimen should be a large one,"* said Møller. *"The Greenland specimen is one of the largest known."*

## HALLELUYAH IT'S RAINING FISH

There have been two fishfalls reported in recent months. The first was in Greece on December 11th 2002 and appeared on the *Anomalist* web site. It came from the AFP News Agency who told the story of how a shower of tiny fish rained down on the village of Korona in the mountains of northern Greece, and quoted local authorities who attributed the incident to a mini-tornado.

As any fortean knows, this is a spectacularly unlikely explanation as the showers of fish are never accompanied by showers of weed, old bicycles, shopping carts or any of the other detritus from ponds or lakes.

The same explanation was touted for the second news story which because of the species involved allowed the editors of this magazine to use the headline "Airborne Weapons of Bass Destruction" when they wrote it up for the May issue of *Tropical Fish* magazine.

It took place in Shreveport, Louisiana where Kenneth Masterson went into his garden early one morning to be greeted by something very peculiar. "There were five or six dead fish about 10 or 12 inches long right at the edge of my yard," he said. [In the road, and on the other side of the street there were many more fish,

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some of them which had already been squashed under the wheels of the passing traffic. "It's just so strange," Masterson said. "They don't look mutilated or like they've had hooks in their mouths."

## ATTACK OF THE CRAB MONSTERS

In a scenario which seems horribly reminiscent of one of the pulp sci fi books of author Guy N Smith, Reuters recently revealed that an army of giant red crabs – which can measure up to two metres wide – have ravaged their way 500 kilometers along Norway's coast in just 10 years. Furthermore there seems to be every likelihood that these creatures will spread across most of coastal Europe – perhaps as far south as Portugal – over the next few years.

The crabs – originally from Kamkatcha – were released into the Russian Atlantic during the Stalin era in the 1930s as an experimental food supply. Things began to go badly wrong when there was an unexplained population explosion and an estimated 12 million of the creatures is now at large in the cold waters of northern Europe.



"Estimates for the potential southward limit for the species range between Lofoten [just inside the Arctic Circle in Norway], the North Sea basin and Portugal," the WWF environmental group said in a report. The WWF suggests a fishing free-for-all to stop the crabs, a delicacy known as Kamchatka crabs or Red King Crabs. The WWF also wants the

United Nations, via its Convention on Biological Diversity, to put pressure on Oslo to halt the crawl. Bjoern Bye, a crab fisherman in the Norwegian Arctic port of Kirkenes, is quoted as suggesting: "They're easy to handle but don't put your fingers near their claws." he said. "I don't think they could cut off a finger but they can give a deep cut."

## AUSTRALIANS WOULDN'T GIVE A XXXX FOR ANY OTHER TYPE OF SHARK

Western Australian scientists are excited after a fisherman and landed the first living specimen offer an extremely rare speartooth shark. It was caught in a remote creek near Derby, 2,300 km north of Perth, and sent to a city university where it was frozen until a taxonomist could positively identify it. The discovery of this fish has overturned accepted knowledge about the range and behaviour of these little known selachians.

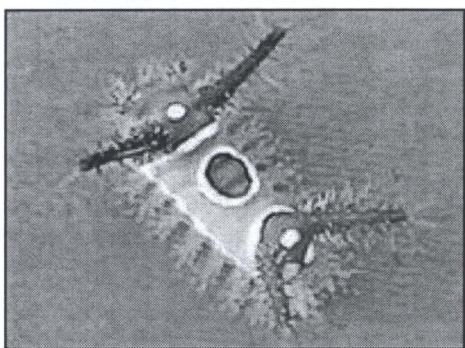
Murdoch University scientist Dean Thorburn said the shark was caught more than 1,000 km from the closest known recorded location – in the Adelaide River, Northern Territory.

The speartoothed sharks are amongst the rarest and a littlest known fish and the sea. Although described as critically endangered, nobody really knows much about them. No one knows how many there are, how they breed where they breed a what they eat, or even how many species there are. "There's a huge amount of coastline between the nearest site, so hopefully there's still good numbers out there somewhere," said Thorburn.

Mr Thorburn's colleague, Doctor David Morgan, caught the speartooth shark on a rod and line. "He was doing research on the Fitzroy River system," Thorburn said. "It was good fortune through a colleague." Speartooth sharks comprise at least two species of the genus *Glyptis*, and are known from only 25 specimens taken in Queensland and the Northern Territory, and a possible three more from the coastal waters off New Guinea.

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## CATER-KILLER



The saddleback caterpillar has tiny spines which can sting. Furthermore it is a North American species. What it was doing in a Garden Centre in Somerset where it was found in February (according to BBC News), no-one seems to know.

The most extraordinary thing about the story is the reaction of the woman who found it who brought it to experts at Bristol Zoo because she was worried it had bitten her. They were able to reassure her that caterpillars do not have strong enough mouthparts to bite, but some species - including this one - have mildly poisonous irritant hairs.

Well Duh!!!

Warren Spencer of Bristol Zoo identified the caterpillar and if correct, it is likely to be the first record of this species in Somerset - and possibly the UK. Members of Bristol & District Moth Group and Somerset Moth Group said they had not seen this species in Somerset before.

## WE'RE ALL WAITING FOR THE ANTS INVASION

As anyone who has been reading this magazine for any length of time will know that we don't really need an excuse to print a headline based on an obscure album track by *Adam and the Ants* – after all that's where the name of the magazine comes

from – but on this occasion we feel that it is perfectly justified.

According to *BBC News Online* a plague of tiny insects called Yellow Crazy Ants is threatening to spread across Australia destroying all in its wake. Described as one of the world's most vicious species of ant, the yellow crazy ant sprays formic acid into the eyes of other animals, leaving them vulnerable to attack and unable to feed themselves. The ants have already wiped out up to 20 million red crabs, as well as birds and other animals on Australia's Christmas Island in the Indian Ocean since 1989, and have since spread to 63 locations in the Northern Territory on the mainland.

The CSIRO, in association with two Aboriginal land management groups, is developing a three-year plan to wipe out a large infestation centred on a 90 kilometre (56 mile) radius around the mining town of Nhulunbuy, on the north-eastern tip of the Northern Territory.

## WHAT A RUDDY WASTE OF MONEY

According to the plot of Stephen Spielberg's "Taken" (shown on Saturday nights on BBC2), there are aliens amongst us, and the Government is spending millions of pounds in an attempt to wipe them out. Surprisingly, this is true, but the aliens in question are not little grey men from outer space but exotic animal species that have become naturalized in the British countryside. Increasing controversy surrounds these policies with claims from leading environmental groups that the whole exercise is cruel, pointless and a waste of public money.

The North American ruddy duck was introduced by Sir Peter Scott in the 1940s, and have established themselves in the wild with an estimated 6000 specimens now living in Britain. A total cull is planned with an estimated cost of £5 million – about £900 per duck.

The cull is taking place because some of the UK birds have migrated to Spain where they have interbred with the white tailed duck - an indigenous (and endangered) European species which will eventually cause the

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extinction of the native species. However, the major reason for the decline of the species (from 100,000 of seventy years ago to about 5,000 now), is habitat loss and unrestricted hunting, and, furthermore, claims that the Spanish population is at risk from interbreeding with the ruddy duck appear to be increasingly dubious. Indeed, some experts have claimed that the Spanish population is already a hybrid between the white headed duck and a North African species.

When contacted, DEFRA denied that a budget had been drawn up for the cull, although their own website claims that "The exercise is likely to cost up to £5.4 million". A cull in 1993 accounted for over 2,000 birds but resulted in widespread opposition from landowners and a number of claims of animal cruelty. DEFRA themselves admit that "shooting caused more disturbance to other birds than did visiting nests to trap ducks or oil eggs (meaning dip them into paraffin), this latter method being 100% effective."

Meanwhile, in Scotland a cull of mink on the Outer Hebrides has cost over £1.6 million and resulted in only a couple of hundred of the North American mammals being shot. This puts the price of killing each mink in excess of £8,700. The small predators escaped from fur farms in the 1950s and 1960s and an estimated 15,000 are on the loose where they pose a threat to ground nesting birds.

## DORRRTY MONKEY

On February 23, 2003 *Associated Press* announced a disturbing piece of news concerning a monkey which had escaped from its cage at a University of California medical research lab. A week and a half later, though, all they found was an angry town armed with new ammunition against a proposed military biological research centre.

Although scientists at the laboratory claim that the monkey was infection free the escape has caused so much controversy that the planners may be forced to rethink. It would be churlish of us to comment further in the present political climate.

*The Independent* from Grand Island, Nebraska reported on February 22, 2003 that the state – north of Kansas - has a new resident – the nine banded armadillo. The manager of a Kearney hardware store managed to take some photographs of the three foot long edentate as it rootled around in a ditch for small invertebrates.

The sighting in south-central Nebraska, about 25 miles southwest is confirmation that the animals common to the southern United States are migrating northward, said Dr. Hugh Genoways, a natural sciences professor with the University of Nebraska State Museum.

Armadillos first showed up in extreme southern Texas in 1850 and have moved north since. They are now reproducing in central Kansas. "*The armadillos are clearly charging in this direction, even if it's only one or two a year,*" Genoways said. The first documented state sighting was south of Arapahoe, near the Kansas-Nebraska border, in 1972. Since then, eight specimens have been recovered with numerous other visual sightings.

The armadillos recovered in Nebraska so far have been mostly males, but more females are expected to soon follow. We feel pretty confident ultimately we may have a viable population," Geoways says.

## TO THE BATCAVE

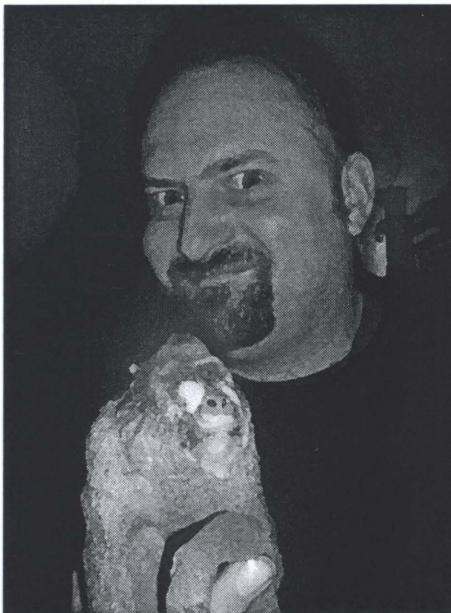
*The Times* on the 19<sup>th</sup> March announced the first British record of the European Free-tailed Bat – the largest bat in Europe. The giant bat, with a wingspan of 19" (47cm) was found exhausted, and injured in Helston, Cornwall. It is believed it had been blown off course from its migration route in the Iberian peninsula.

Ginni Little, the owner of the bat hospital was astonished at its size. "*This is something I've only ever seen in books*", she said. The bat is making good progress. Its weight has gone up to 30 grammes and it is eating solid food.

European Free-tailed Bats are high fliers and have been spotted by airline pilots several miles up.

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And finally  
Richard....



Proof, as if any proof were needed, says Richard, that cats are an irritating lifeform comes from *El Universal On-Line* (Mexico) on March 26, 2003 which reported the sordid tale of a UFO report over Norway which turned out to be an electrocuted cat.

Residents of the city of Lardal claimed having seen a ball of fire in the sky falling slowly to the ground. Researchers solved the mystery by finding the charred carcass of the cat next to a streetlamp.

They believe the animal climbed the structure and was electrocuted. "Serves the stupid animal right" said Richard with a grin. "Dogs are much better".

## CFZ PEOPLE

- In this issue we say goodbye to Roger Hutchings. A supporter of the CFZ since the beginning, Roger had researched the Tatzelwurm while living in France in the years immediately before World War 2. He wrote a fascinating article on his work which appeared in *A&M 2*. He always supported us and with his death in February we feel that we have lost a good friend although we never met in person.
- We also wish to express our condolences to Chris Moiser who has lost both his parents in the last few months. Hang on in there buddy. It does get better, I promise you.
- Also sadly missed is Dolly the first cloned sheep who was euthanased recently after suffering an unexpected infection. Whether this is a sign that we are not yet sufficiently *au fait* with the problems inherent in cloning remains to be seen.
- On a happier note may we extend our congratulations to our friend Simon Wolstencroft who is the editor of *Tropical Fish* magazine and the source of about the only gainfull income that the CFZ actually has on a month-to-month basis. He went behind everyone's back and married Debbie late last year in Gibraltar. Then showing great élan and style he invited the CFZ to a belated stag party, where much ale was consumed.

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## MAN ON THE MENU:

### SALTWATER CROCODILES IN THE NEWS

The Indopacific crocodile is justly feared as one of the most impressive predators on the planet. Reaching a length of thirty-three feet and a weight of three tons they have the most powerful bite (a force of 10,000 Newtons) of any animal in the world.

A large specimen is invulnerable to anything except man. Once highly endangered they have made a remarkable recovery since the 1950s and, surprisingly, kill more humans each year than any other predator.

A number of incidents have reached our newsdesk in recent weeks.

- A 23 ft specimen is terrorizing the residents of the island of Ternate in Indonesia. It is known to have killed at least four people – the latest of whom is a teenager found decapitated.
- British musician Richard Shadwell (35) on holiday in Borneo was unwise enough to go swimming behind a boat in the Sekonyer River when he was grabbed and pulled underwater by a 20 ft croc.

- A Thai woman killed herself by jumping into a pit of more than 100 crocodiles, shocking crowds of onlookers at a Bangkok reptile farm. Police said the woman had left a suicide note in which she complained about her husband and apologized to family members. The Famut Prakarn Crocodile Farm is home to the world's largest captive specimen – named Yai. Richard Freeman visited the farm in October 2000 with a crew from the Discovery Channel and was filmed feeding the giant reptiles with dead chickens.
- German Tourist Isabel von Jordan – ironically a survivor of the Bali Terror attacks – tempted fate when she ignored warning signs at Kakudu National Park, Northern Australia and went night swimming. She was grabbed by a 12 foot crocodile and killed. It took six harpoons to kill the beast.
- A closely related species – the Nile crocodile – killed a British student called Amy Nicholls in a Kenyan lake. Locals had told her that it was safe to swim there because despite local legends of a lake monster no crocodiles were known to exist there. Now they know better.
- A saltwater crocodile was discovered in a storm drain in Singapore's financial district. The reptile, about 1.7 metres (5.5 feet) long, was spotted basking in a storm drain by a passerby. Police then waded in to bundle the Australian saltwater crocodile to Singapore Zoo, where it will spend two to three months in quarantine. It is not known whether it was an illegal pet or an immigrant from another country, as the "saltie" is known for its prowess in covering vast distances at sea.. Although their natural range is from Northern Australia through Indonesia and Malaysia to India and Sri Lanka. However stragglers have been reported from the waters off New Zealand, Hong Kong and Japan.

A 25 foot serial man-eater from the Lumpar River in Sarawak has become so feared that it is worshipped as a God by the local Ibad Tribesmen.

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## OBITUARY

### Paul Freeman

By Loren Coleman

Longtime Bigfoot hunter Paul Freeman, 59, died on April 2, 2003, at his Airway Heights home, located near Spokane, Washington, according his family and long-time friend Vance Orchard.

Paul Freeman has been a part of the Bigfoot scene since June 10, 1982, when, near Walla Walla, Washington, he first encountered a hairy, reddish-brown Bigfoot, nearly 8 feet tall. The muscular, bearded, 6-foot-4-inches tall, 265 pound Freeman was working as a watershed patroller for the U.S. Forest Service.

*"He was 60 yards away,"* Freeman recalled for reporter David Foster in 1997. *"I watched him walk the length of two football fields. He'd take a few steps, look back at me, and take a few more steps. Then he went up over a hill and disappeared."*

*"When word got out,"* wrote Foster, *"Freeman became an instant celebrity, but the fame was spiked with ridicule. Reporters hounded him. His supervisors doubted him."*

*Anonymous callers said he was crazy and threatened to take his three children away. Freeman quit his Forest Service job and moved away, drifting through a series of jobs. A gnawing need for vindication, he says, drew him back to Walla Walla in 1984."*

Once back in the Walla Walla area, Paul

Freeman became an almost full-time Bigfoot hunter. After the late Dr. Grover Krantz began finding dermal ridges in Freeman-discovered plaster casts in the 1980s, Freeman gained some respectability. In the 2003 book, *Bigfoot! The True Story of Apes in America*, it is noted that the Paul Freeman's footcasts were the critical piece of evidence that convinced Krantz of the reality of Sasquatch. It was a turning point for Bigfoot studies.

Others did not know what to make of Freeman's claims. The late Canadian Sasquatch researcher Rene Dahinden thought Freeman might just be a publicity-seeker. And Freeman's old Forest Service employers regularly would withhold comment about Freeman's findings.

Still, some people such as newspaper columnist Vance Orchard chronicled Freeman's quest as compelling, and discussed what the Washington State man found in the way of Bigfoot tracks and other evidence.

In the last few years, Dr. Jeff Meldrum of Idaho State University grew to know Freeman well, and closely studied the dermal ridges in the Walla Walla footcasts, with much interest.

In the 1990s, Freeman began taking photographs and films at an increasing rate. In the 2003 Discovery Channel documentary, *Sasquatch: Legend Meets Science*, a segment of one of Paul Freeman's footage is examined.

Freeman tracked Bigfoot in the forests of the Pacific Northwest, sometimes three days a week, late in the 1990s, and put \$50,000 into the search.

But, for Freeman, he readily admitted that he never made any real money for his Bigfoot work, only earning \$2,000 once, from appearing in an ice cream commercial featuring people who do unbelievable things.



## **Latest news from the CFZ Alien Big Cat Study Group**

### **THE WELSH CONNECTION**

The fact that at least three exotic cat species have become established – to a greater or lesser degree – in the British countryside, is seen by many scientists and ecologists as an encouraging sign.

Perhaps someone ought to tell the Dyfed-Powys Police that!

Despite advice from people like me who do our best to reassure both pundits and public alike that these creatures are essentially harmless, the powers that be insist on over-reacting to an extraordinary degree to any perceived threat of the feline kind. The latest furore – which sometimes threatened to topple over into complete farce – took place in early January when at Llangadog (seventeen miles north of Llanedi), a big cat was believed to have savagely killed a pensioner's dog.

Photographs of some very dubious looking paw-prints found at the scene were reproduced in a national newspaper that really should have known better. CFZ Zoologist Richard Freeman identified them as those of a large dog. We issued a press

statement urging caution and reminding the general public at large (and senior policemen and press pundits in particular) that there is no evidence whatsoever that these creatures have EVER attacked a human being in Britain. Needless to say the gentlemen of the press completely ignored us and printed a series of scare stories about the alleged attack in 2000 on schoolboy, Josh Hopkins who said he had been attacked by a panther-type animal which clawed his face. Jon visited the small town of Trellech within days of the attack, and we are not prepared to comment further on the case. Sufficient to say, however, that we are not prepared to include that particular incident as a *bona fide* account of a British big cat attack.

Over the years we have also investigated several other alleged attacks on people. On each occasion we came away convinced that the story in question was nonsense. Some of the cases were hoaxes, some were simple mistakes, other so-called "victims" were clearly delusional and others were barking mad. We have also investigated a number of alleged attacks on livestock, and the vast majority were obviously the result of rogue dogs. It seems certain to us that the largest single food source for the burgeoning population of UK big cats are rabbits, and that the increase in the numbers of big cat sightings in recent years is exponentially linked

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to the explosion in the rabbit population. We have said as much to TV reporters, journalists, police forces, farmers and everyone else who would listen over the years but to no avail.

Whenever there are reports of a big cat attack – no matter how dubious – the newspapers and the police continue to over-react. The Welsh police really went to town on this incident, and a number of newspapers reported how teams of armed police continued to stake out the farm where the dog had been killed. Police warned the public and farmers not to search for the beast puma-like cat, and the newspapers had a field day. There were plenty of pictures of heavily armed bands of policemen staking out wild looking areas of Welsh moorland and one newspaper even managed the outstanding feat of quoting big-cat expert Quentin Rose. This piece of journalism was remarkable because Quentin had died some considerable time before.

Nearly four weeks after the initial attack both the big cats, (and the CFZ), were vindicated when on Wednesday, 29 January, 2003, Rural Development Minister Michael German announced that DNA tests which had been carried out at the UK Government's central science laboratory in York showed no trace of any big cat DNA.

It seems perfectly clear to us that the sightings of a large black cat in the area where the whippet had been killed on 3<sup>rd</sup> January are purely coincidental. However, one cannot help but wonder how many hundreds of thousands of pounds have been wasted by the Dyfed-Powys police, and by other forces across the country, just because they prefer to listen to the ill-informed rants of tabloid journalists rather than to the experts?

## **POLITICAL NEWS**

The *Western Morning News* on the first of March 2003 quoted Countryside Minister Elliot Morley's parliamentary response a question about big cats in the wilds of Britain. It was possible that people were "*genuinely and frequently mistaken with their identification,*" the minister told the House of Commons in a written answer, before

going on to question the "*lack of hard evidence compared to the number of reported sightings...*"

His replies are in line with the general scepticism that successive governments have shown about the big cat phenomenon in the 20 or more years during which regular sightings have been reported.

We should probably not be surprised. After all, recent events – both on the home and world stages – have underlined the oft-stated truth that politicians prefer not to have to do anything unless they are driven to it, and when they finally do act they usually do something stupid.

With this in mind, we feel that the stated aim of various UK big cat researchers to call for the burgeoning ABC population to be protected by law is highly unrealistic. There is no historical precedent for ANY alien animal species being given legal protection, and if the politicians are forced into a position where they have to take action, I think that any of our readers currently living in Afghanistan or Iraq will know what the chances of reasoned, logical and well-balanced action is likely to be.

## **THE LATEST ABC REPORTS FROM AROUND THE WORLD**

### United Kingdom

#### • SCOTLAND: Fife

A member of the public contacted the police after claiming to have seen a large animal, like a panther or jaguar, in the grounds of the Diageo bottling plant in Leven. There have been a number of similar sightings in north east Fife in recent years, but few in central Fife. A spokesman for Fife Constabulary said: "*I can confirm the police were called to the ground at the Diageo on Tuesday following a call from someone who sighted a large cat in the area. A search was made but no trace of the animal was found.*" Source: *Fife On-line*: March 27, 2003

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## • SCOTLAND: Renfrewshire

Mary Erskine, 42, discovered a set of strange pawprints outside her family's home in Walnut Crescent, Johnstone Castle.

She described the paw prints as being "as big as a human hand" and added "you could even see the claws in them".

She contacted CFZ associate Mark Fraser revealed there had also been a sighting of a puma-like creature in the Renfrewshire area recently. He said: "If the photographs are clear enough I should be able to identify what kind of animal made them."

Mark, added: "We have also had reports of a large puma-like creature in the village of Bridge of Weir. A gentleman reported seeing the animal in a garden there. It was about twice the size of a fox and a sandy brown colour. It also had a long bushy tail that tapered off at the end.

We reckon these kind of animals can travel about 20 or 30 miles, so the paw prints in Johnstone and the sighting in Bridge of Weir could be the same creature. That is entirely possible, or they could be two different animals." Source: Paisley Daily Express / Scotland – 5.3.03

## • Wales

Warning signs have gone up at the Ashburnham Golf Club, Burry Port, following the sighting of the animal by a green keeper. Martyn Williams says he got within 30ft of the cat and watched in silence before the creature bolted into sand dunes. Police later attended the scene and took away a plaster cast of a paw print left at the course. Mr Williams said: "I was driving along just off the 13th green when I saw a rusty red creature in front of me. I stopped and watched the cat for three or four minutes. When I restarted the machine, the animal ran away quickly and vanished into the distance." He said the cat was about three feet tall while sat down and had pointed ears. "It took me by surprise and I managed to get a good look because it wasn't very far away," said Mr Williams.

Source: Llanelli Series, 6.02.03 .

Meanwhile Burry Port councillor Stephen James has provided a very real mystery. How come a politician is actually talking sense about the subject? It must be a first. He is questioning the cost of the investigation into big cat sightings in west Wales. "*If there is a danger to the public then it needs to be treated seriously, but police resources are stretched as it is (...) I am not sure how much money it is costing, but I would question if a great deal of resources are being used for it. At the moment it seems to be rather hyped.*" He added: "Police in Burry Port are stretched to the limit. We need greater resources. Crime is ever present. It is wrong that a lot of resources should be spent in this way if there is no real threat". Source Llanelli Star 23.1.03

A big cat, described as big, black and muscular, has been spotted in Mynydd Y Garreg Quarry. Mr Jones, of Lady Street, Kidwelly, believes the quarry is the perfect hiding place for the big cats to live and breed as it is a quiet secluded area where humans rarely visit. Mr Jones said that an animal fitting the same description has also been seen in the Ferry Road area of Kidwelly. Llanelli Star, 6.03.2003.

## • Northampton

Stagecoach bus driver Garry Goodson, 44, says he saw the beast on 23<sup>rd</sup> February at about 9.50pm as he was driving along the Aldwinclle Road off the A6116. Mr Goodson, of Almond Road, Kettering, said: "It was definitely a black panther, it was huge. "I was doing the Weetabix 10pm run and I was on my way to pick up a couple of the workers from Aldwinclle, so no one was on the bus at the time. I just saw these two huge yellow eyes in front of me. It was such a shock. The cat was bigger than an Alsatian with a large curled tail. I didn't get to see it for long as it dashed off very fast."

It is the second time Mr Goodson has seen the animal. The first time was about three years ago when he was fishing by Blatherwycke Lake.

SOURCE Northampton News 27.3.03

## • Essex

Two women, who do not wish to be named, claim to have seen a black panther-like creature lurking outside

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Longmead Court Nursing Home in London Road,  
Black Notley. Essex Evening Echo 6.3.03

*back legs and tail were still visible in the other. Now, that's a big cat."*

## • Lancashire

There has been a spate of sightings in our old stamping ground of Ormskirk in West Lancashire. There have been sightings of a five foot cat like creature in Tarleton and Gordon Singleton reported a close encounter in Burscough. Mr Singleton, an HGV driver, explained: *"As I turned up Martin Lane it just leapt out of the field, dashed straight in front of me and looked right at the lights. It was jet black and had a long tail. Its body was a similar size to a labrador's but slimmer."*

A week later a creature described as a "panther" was seen by a woman in Newburgh who was returning from a car boot sale. Source: *Ormskirk Advertiser* 6.3.03; 13.3.03

## • Cumbria

Geoff Brown, 52, was driving home through the Heron Hill estate towards Esthwaite Green, Kendal, when he saw what at first he believed to be a black Labrador at the side of the road. But as his car drew nearer the animal crossed the road and to Mr Brown's amazement he saw a large, black cat that he estimated to be 2ft 6 inches in height with a long body and tail. Mr Brown said he was shocked to see the animal in such a built up area and reported what he had seen to the police who logged the incident. Source: *The Westmorland Gazette* - 13.03.03

## • Kent

Paw prints measuring 4.5-by-4in, which are allegedly from a fully-grown puma were found at an allotment in Crayford. The discovery follows numerous sightings of a fawn coloured big cat in the Bexley area. Steve Gardiner of Bexley had an encounter with a mysterious beast in January. *"It was a big cat - I don't mean a big house cat, I mean it was like a panther. I was sitting in my armchair in the living room, and it just looked in at me through the open patio doors. What I remember about its size was that, as it walked away, its nose disappeared from the edge of one door while its*

*A taxi-driver had reported an eight-minute sighting of a black leopard-like creature on a path next to the Gardiners' home, one week before Steve had seen his. There were also sightings in Hillview Cemetery, off Shooters Hill, and in Dartford, near the M25. Frank Mortimer, a 58-year-old security worker, says he saw the Beast in October 2001 in the Princess Road area of Dartford. It was shortly after 8pm and he was walking his West Highland terrier, Tamm, when the animal appeared in front of him.*

*"It was no more than 10 to 15 feet away from me," he recalls. "It was black, about four-and-a-half feet long with a curly tail and it had yellowish eyes. It took me completely by surprise. My initial reaction was one of shock to come face to face with such a large animal. Then Tamm started barking and tried to chase after it and it bounded off. I have no doubt that it was a panther. I have seen them in the wild on various holidays in Africa. This was definitely not an ordinary cat, even an unusually large one. At first, people didn't believe me - they would ask if I had been drinking, which I hadn't." We will ignore the assertion that he has witnessed melanistic leopards wild in Africa for the moment and move on to the next witness.*

Mick Cole needs no convincing that they are out there. Last January the 42-year-old optician from Gravesend noticed what he thought was a fox running off with a wriggling rabbit down an alleyway next to his home.

*"I like rabbits and I decided to try to save it," says Mr Cole. "I had read that if you run at a fox waving your arms, it will drop its food and run away, so I ran forward, screaming like a banshee. At the last minute, just as I had stuck one arm out to catch the rabbit, I suddenly realised that this was no fox; it was a very angry big cat. It lashed out just once, and left huge gashes down my arm, and then it ran away. It was my mistake; the animal wasn't attacking me - as far as it was concerned, it was simply acting in self-defence. Immediately I thought it was a lynx because of the black tips on its ears." Source: *Evening Standard* 24.1.03*

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## • Somerset

A Coleford man, walking his dog, found a six-and-a-half inch paw print in wet concrete. Within days, resident Jenny Peplow was out walking her two boxer dogs when she encountered noises and images that are not easily explained. *"The dogs started acting really strangely, running around in circles and scampering about,"* said Mrs Peplow. *"I was looking into the other field from where we were walking and I saw one of my dogs chasing what looked like a huge cat with a big fluffy tail. I was so shocked I came to a halt and all three of us just stood there. Whatever it was must have sensed my fear. To me it looked orange and black and it wasn't running like a dog, more like a cat."*

Another sighting featured teenager Mitchell Summers was left gasping for breath when he returned home to Tower View in Frome after taking his dog out for a walk. The 14-year-old told his mother that he had stared a huge black cat straight in the eyes while out in the woods before the animal darted away. Source: *Somerset Guardian*, 31.01.2003.

One Leigh-on-Mendip resident saw an unusual creature while she was out walking near woodland by the village. Susan Mattick, of Field View, admits she was always a bit sceptical about such a claim. But she said: *"I was out this morning walking my dog in the Coleford area when I saw the black cat which had the shape of a black fox. I could see the body clearly but not the head, the animal was standing by a style - I can't say I was afraid. I do walk my dog every day and often see deer and other animals. It was a very clear sighting and the animal just slinked away."*

Meanwhile, another there was another report from the Holcombe area:

Jane Rous-Milligan says she saw a large cat-like animal when she was living at Holcombe Hill last September. She said: *"We had a very long garden, about 100ft long, and I was out there at about 4pm. I was looking down the garden when I saw this big black animal walk across the bottom of the garden. I thought it might have been a big dog, but it did not move like one or look like one. It just walked across the bottom of the garden. I really stared at it*

*and then went indoors and told my husband."* Source: *Somerset Guardian*, 3.6.2003.

## • Devonshire

Mrs Douglas-Mann spotted a big cat while working on land at her home in Petrockstow, near Hatherleigh. She said: *"The night before our two dogs had been very restless, barking all the time, but we thought nothing of it. Then in the morning my husband and I went to one of our fields to start digging rhubarb. Suddenly our terrier, Jack, started barking and ran off towards a hedgerow. I presumed he was chasing a fox but then he started yelping horribly. I couldn't see him so obviously I was distraught. Then he went quiet. An animal the size of a collie dog came loping out of the hedge and ran off. It was definitely not a dog or a fox because it ran in the distinctive way cats do and we were only about thirty feet away. It was jet black with a white bib and it kept looking round and back towards us as it ran. We were both gobsmacked. It was very surreal."* Source: *Western Morning News*, 30.01.2003.

## • Lincolnshire

Rachael Wydrzynska, from Lincoln, is convinced that she saw a big cat as she drove along Tillbridge Lane, near the county showground, at 10.30pm on Wednesday, March 12.

She said: *"It was definitely a large cat-like creature which I saw pounce off in the direction of the showground. It was the size of a largish dog but definitely moved like a cat with one bound from one side of the road to the other. It was grey and another thing that struck me was the speed with which it moved. I can't remember seeing a tail at the time but at one point it was only 10 metres from the front of my bonnet. I'd never heard of the Lincoln Lynx before and it was only when I got back home and told people about my sighting that they, in turn, told me about this creature."*

Source: [thisislincolnshire.co.uk](http://thisislincolnshire.co.uk)

## • Buckinghamshire

A big cat has been spotted prowling along the edge of a field in Princes Risborough. Staff at furniture manufacturers Ercol have told how they watched the

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jet black animal for more than 15 minutes as it skulked by a hedge near the factory last month. First to spot it was Steve Lomas, 39, Ercol's project co-ordinator, who said: "It was around 8.30 on a clear frosty morning. From the top of our portable office we saw a big black cat crouching very low along the furrows about 30 or 40ft away. It was looking back at us and then it disappeared into the hedge." SOURCE: *Bucks Free Press* 26th March 2003

## • Cornwall

A caller on a local radio programme who claimed to have recently seen a black cat-like creature around six feet in length crossing the A30 road near Roseworthy. The call was followed by a second from John Carter of Camborne, who later said: "I saw a similar creature three or four weeks ago, but never said anything to anybody for fear of being ridiculed. My wife and I were driving down the road between Connor Downs and Gwithian when I spotted this black cat emerge from the hedge on one side of the road and run into a cemetery on the other side". SOURCE: *The Cornishman* 27.03.03

## • Wiltshire

There have been a number of recent sightings of a "long black cat" in the Marlborough area. Miss Gingell, who teaches science at Commonwealth School in Swindon, reported seeing a black cat the size of a Labrador dog in a field on the edge of Calne. She said the animal she sighted was far too big to have been a domestic cat. SOURCE: *This is Marlborough* 27 February 2003

## • WORCESTERSHIRE

Christine Carley, of Westbury Avenue, Droitwich drew open her curtains at 6.45am, and spotted an animal prowling in the snow, 50 yards from her window. The 56-year-old expected it to be a dog but the animal's feline gait made her look again. "The animal was very black and about the size of a Labrador," she said. "Its head appeared to be round and had no snout." She quickly dressed, went outside and found fresh paw prints. "They were two inches across, in pairs and without claw marks," said the married mother-of-two. Just weeks

before a Wychbold resident had spotted a large black animal eating from a refuse sack at his Crown Lane home. SOURCE: *This is Worcester* 16 January 2003

## • Hampshire

Newspapers reported how Pensioner, Caroline Gilbert was "left shocked" after a black animal with white hind quarters leapt out of bushes in front of her as she walked her two dogs around Itchen Valley Country Park, West End, Southampton. The 62-year-old watched as the ferocious feline sprinted for 30 seconds before it disappeared into woodland near a reservoir. "It moved like a cat and was bigger than a Labrador. It ran very quickly but I got a good look at it for half a minute. I am absolutely sure that it wasn't a deer or a dog. It was about 50 yards away." SOURCE: *Newsquest Media* 1.2.03

## CANADA

The campaign to prove the continued existence of the Eastern puma in Canada suffered a setback recently when hair samples taken from the scene of the latest big cat encounter turned out to be from a cow. The New Brunswick Natural Resources Department confirmed that the hair, from a farm near Miramichi City, was not from what appeared to be a black, eastern cougar. "Obviously, the people who reported the sighting didn't confuse an eastern cougar with a cow," said Brent Roy, spokesman for the department. There's a cattle farm nearby and apparently the hair was blown into the area where the sighting occurred." SOURCE: *The Canadian Press* 22 January 2003

## UNITED STATES

### • Illinois

Puma sightings in Illinois have been increasing recently despite the fact that there has only been one single confirmed record since 1862. "Every once in awhile I have to ask myself, did I really see (a cougar)? And I did," said Sam Hodgett, a retired farmer who saw his big cat while driving with his wife,

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Sandra, near Sheffield. "If I hadn't been with my wife I wouldn't have told anyone. But we both saw it." SOURCE: *Peoria Journal Star*, 20 December 2002

## • Massachusetts

Residents in Springfield (not Homer Simpson) have been reporting increasing numbers of eastern puma sightings. Todd Doiron of Westfield saw one near Route 20 in Russell. He also says an acquaintance saw one in Montgomery, possibly the same animal. *"What a beautiful animal. I have been seeing all kinds of wildlife. Except deer. So go figure,"* he says. SOURCE: *Springfield Union-News*, 17 November 2002

## • Georgia

A family driving along a wooded section of Noah's Ark Road near Jonesboro caught a glimpse of a most peculiar cat racing out of a pasture. It was as big as a large dog, with pointed ears and a golden-brown coat. The description was consistent with three other sightings, including one captured on a videotape by a visitor from India. Unlike the vast majority of big cats reported in this section this animal does not appear to be either a hoax, a misidentification of a domestic animal or a possible eastern puma. One is left with only two possibilities – it is a colour variant of a bobcat or puma or it is an escaped exotic. SOURCE: *Atlanta Journal and Constitution* 16 November 2002

## • Virginia

J. Russell saw the phantom in broad daylight this summer - large and crouching low, moving silently and disappearing in an instant. Russell was driving to her home near the Blue Ridge Parkway with her husband, daughter and two cocker spaniels when she saw a 70- pound brown cat slinking across a neighbor's driveway, just three car lengths away from them. She and her husband stared, mesmerized, for a solid 20 seconds before it vanished into the forest. *"It stopped. It crouched and it looked straight at us,"* Russell said. *"It was an incredibly beautiful animal."* The family's close encounter, and another a few nights later, left them certain that

these were not bobcats, deer or coyote. They were cougars. The last verified killing of one in Virginia happened in Washington County in 1882. SOURCE: *Roanoke Times & World News*, 21 October 2002

According to Park Service records, there have been four cougar sightings in Cades Cove during the summer of 2002, the first occurring in June on the north side of the Loop Road near Tater Branch. The observer, a man from Ohio, took a long-range picture of the cougar out in a field that failed to produce an identifiable image. According to the report, the man wanted to get closer, but his wife wouldn't let him. The next day another sighting occurred at the same location, and this time the observer saw what looked like a cougar catch a fawn. Of the two other Cades Cove sightings, one occurred on July 14 near the Cooper Road Trail close to Abrams Creek, while the other occurred July 16 a half-mile east of the Cades Cove entrance at Laurel Creek Road.

Another cougar sighting occurred in the first week of June when a man and his wife spotted what appeared to be a cougar while driving on U.S. Highway 441 just north of the Sugarlands Visitor Center. According to the report, the animal was fawn-colored, weighed about 75 pounds and crouched at the edge of the road before walking slowly into the woods. SOURCE: *The Knoxville News-Sentinel*, 22 September 2002

There have been a number of sightings at Chincoteague, starting on January 15th, when Helen White, 76-year-old island native saw "a panther" slipping into her mobile home, black and sleek and with large, almond-shaped green eyes. *"I squealed, because you see, we usually don't get that sort of thing around here,"* she said. *"And when I screamed, that must have scared him, because that's when he grabbed me by the leg, and he tore the meat of my leg. I grabbed for a plate, and he grabbed my arm."*

Police Chief Edward Lewis said officers answered multiple reports of a prowling big cat on the south end of town. Officers saw no panthers. What they did see on several calls was a black Labrador on the loose. Police found that one of Helen White's neighbors had a big black cat with a red collar. The tip checked out: They found a green-eyed animal that weighed 18 to 20 pounds -- half the reported size of the renegade

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panther, but bulkier than the average house cat. *The Virginian-Pilot* 2.2.03

## • Kansas

A cougar was mortally wounded by a car on Interstate 35 in the Northland early Monday, but it could be days or weeks before it can be determined whether the cat was wild or domestic. This is the first documented case of one of the big cats on the prowl in the Kansas City area in a century or more, said Dave Hamilton, a biologist for the Missouri Department of Conservation. Biologists don't know whether the cougar, also called a mountain lion, was truly wild or whether it had been released or escaped from captivity. They will study its body, stomach contents and DNA to learn more. That could take weeks. Cougars were once native to Missouri and Kansas. But hunting and habitat loss wiped out the wild populations. In Missouri, the last documented free-roaming wild cougar from the original populations was shot in the swamps of the southeast Bootheel in 1927. Other records are sketchy. But Hamilton said cougars probably had vanished from northwest Missouri by the 1880s or early 1900s, and perhaps from the Kansas City area as early as the Civil War. SOURCE: *The Kansas City Star*, 15 October 2002

Charles Lee is the wildlife specialist for the Kansas State extension service. He says: "I got a call last week from a man wondering if I'd like to watch some home video of a mountain lion. Sure, I said, since the location was right here in Topeka and that's where the video had been shot. Alas, it was grainy and out of focus. All I could tell was that it was a cat of some kind with a long tail." Apparently his office gets between 30-50 reports of the creatures each year. SOURCE: *The Topeka Capital-Journal*, 29 September 2002

## • Michigan

Wild cougars, supposedly wiped out in the state in 1906, are now being blamed for a series of attacks on horses and other animals at two Kalkaska County farms. Separate DNA evidence also indicates that cougars live in five other Michigan counties in both

peninsulas. SOURCE: *Associated Press Newswires*, 29 September 2002

## • Connecticut

Over the summer and autumn of 2002 there were at least four sightings of pumas in the state, which add fuel to the theories that the eastern puma never died out there. The official explanation is, however, still that they are escaped pets. A north Somers resident told Animal Control Officer Jennifer Rose that he sighted a mountain lion on his way home -- the third such unconfirmed report in town in a week. It appeared to weigh about 80 pounds and stood 2 feet tall and 3 feet long, with a tail about as long as its body. SOURCE: *The Hartford Courant*, 11 September 2002; 12 September 2002

## • Ohio

The sheriff's office, which had been investigating sightings of a mystery cat in Liberty Center, claims that the suspected puma sightings at Waterville Township in Lucas County were a large domestic moggy. Tom Kovacik, a former official with the city of Toledo, spotted a catlike animal outside his sister's house shortly after noon. Mr. Kovacik estimated the animal stood knee-high and weighed about 50 pounds. "It was sitting on its haunches," he said. "I thought it was a tree stump. Then I saw something move." SOURCE *Toledo Blade* 11.2.03

## • Arkansas

Following a weekend search led by a Florida big cat expert, wildlife experts say that it is unlikely that a puma was behind a series of dog maulings in the Hot Springs area. The state hired Roy McBride -- who has tracked big cats in both North and South America -- to investigate reports from city residents.

## • Michigan

On 15 November 2002 the *Times Herald* carried a round up of recent puma sightings in the state and ended up with the encouraging news that not only is the species recolonising the State where it was wiped out over a century ago but that some "Wildlife biologists believe there may be as many cougars

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roaming west of the Mississippi now as when the Mayflower landed." Interestingly, Michigan is in the middle of Eastern and Western Puma country so unlike recent accounts in the Eastern states this appears to be recolonisation from western populations rather than a reappearance of a relict population of the supposedly extinct Eastern Puma.

## AUSTRALIA

- Victoria

Retired car worker George Jurriaans and his wife Ruth saw what they believe was a black panther at Healesville. "I've seen feral cats before and it was too big to be one of those," Mr Jurriaans said. The creature's tail, with a rounded end, looked as long as its body and danced and bounced as it moved. The creature showed no fear when it noticed the Mr Jurriaans and his wife. The sighting follows two Queensland boys' close encounter at their grandparent's Healesville property on December 28. Chris McLaren, 15, said the animal was smaller than a horse but bigger than a dog and made cat-like sounds as it attacked another animal. SOURCE: *Victoria Herald Sun* 28.1.03; 31.1.03

- New South Wales

Lithgow is the location of another hotspot of 'black panther' sightings. The latest witness is part of a group of animal welfare volunteers who had been seeking to retrieve a batch of kittens they learned had been dumped on the hillside behind Morts Estate. The trio had commented during the week on the number of unusually large paw prints they had encountered along Farmers Creek. At dusk one member of the group went to inspect cat traps along the railway line that leads to the State Mine Museum when she had what she described as the most frightening experience of her life. The woman said it was about 8.20 pm when she heard a loud scuffling noise in the bush nearby which she thought was a wild pig. It was then that she saw a 'very large cat-like animal' that she said was 'definitely not a dog'. She had a good view of the animal before it moved away, covering more than 10 metres in just two bounds. "It was leaping, not running like a dog."

she said. SOURCE: *Lithgow Mercury*, Tuesday, 25 February 2003

## TIGER TALES

In one of those strange coincidences which plague forteana we have had a spate of tiger stories in recent months and this seems as good a place to put them as anywhere...

## PUNJABI PUSSY

A mysterious animal has created panic among the residents of the village of Sihala in the northern Indian state of Punjab and surrounding areas after it bit and killed a buffalo and a calf. Sub Divisional Magistrate Samrala Jaspal Singh visited the village and directed range officer of the forest department to catch the animal. A 50-year-old woman was also attacked by the animal, but she escaped with some bruises. Jafram Singh, a resident of the village who spotted the animal told reporters that the size of animal is bigger than a dog. "Its mouth is bigger than the mouth of a lion. The brown-coloured animal has a red line around its neck," he said, adding he had seen the animal in the fields a week before.

However, the CFZ believe that we are able to solve the mystery.

In his *Mystery Cats of the World – From Blue Tigers to Exmoor Beasts* (Hale, London, 1989), Karl Shuker quotes a letter which was published in *The Times* in 1936:

"W H Carter commented that in one of the official gazetteers of Bengal a local tiger form was mentioned that does not possess stripes at all but is instead uniformly brown. Carter suggested that that would serve as camouflage in the open, sandy tracts of the Sunderbans which it inhabits. Further data on tigers with reduced striping has been documented by Willy Schroeter".

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The two animals sound extremely similar and we would hazard a reasonably well informed guess that this is what the latest beast of the Punjab actually is.  
SOURCE: *The Press Trust of India Limited*; 1 September 2002

## **MANCHURIAN MOGGY**



A wild Siberian tiger was photographed in northeastern China last week for the first time - an indication the increasingly rare beasts are returning to areas they once roamed years ago. The rare and beautiful animal was captured on film in the Hunchun Nature reserve in Jilin province by an automatic "camera trap," the New York-based Wildlife Conservation Society said. This is "strong evidence that tigers are crossing from the Russian Far East to repopulate previous tiger strongholds."  
SOURCE: *The Commercial Appeal* Memphis, TN, 9 February 2003

## **SURABAYA JOHNNY**

Didik Raharyono and his wife, Dewi Kurnianingsih, are carrying out an investigation into sightings of the Javan Tiger which has supposedly been extinct since the 1980s.

His ambition has taken him into forests and outlying caves in many parts of Java. He claims that he has found much evidence to suggest that the creature is still extant. The Indonesian Government has ignored local people's evidence even though some people living near forests have told him that they still poached the animal even after it was declared

extinct. "*They (the villagers) are not stupid because they know the animal still exists. Besides, they can precisely describe the Javan tiger's features.*"

The self-proclaimed poachers have also given him tiger parts as "gifts": teeth, skin or whiskers of the tigers they had killed some months or years ago. He collects all the parts as material evidence to prove his thesis. The Indonesian Institute of Sciences (LIPI) have confirmed that these body parts are from the supposedly extinct subspecies. Didik even once sighted a Javan tiger in Meru Betiri National Park when he and his research team were carrying out a 14-day survey. "*As we were inside the tent at night, we heard the tiger roar at about 2 a.m. That was the most memorable experience of all our expeditions,*" he recalls. SOURCE: *Jakarta Post*, 30 October 2002

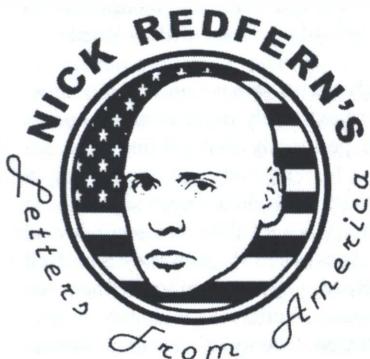
## **CUSTODIAL TIGER-NAPPING**

In early December Canadian police were looking for a stolen tiger last seen in the back seat of a powder-blue Chrysler getaway car driven by a woman who (in an unfortunate choice of words probably suggesting that she hailed from Skinningrove), "*formerly had a relationship*" with the beast. The Bengal tiger, named Shiva, was kidnapped from a small exotic animal farm north of Toronto in a mysterious case police are now calling "*custodial tiger-napping*."

*"It's not a random act,"* says Ted Smith, spokesman for the Ontario Provincial Police. *"The person who took the cat is familiar with the cat. This person obviously cares for the cat."* The woman's husband had donated the cat to an exotic animal farm about three months before because the family lived in an area that did not allow exotic animals. Every few weeks, the couple and their daughter would make the five-hour drive from their home to visit the cat. One day she just stole him back. *"Most likely they drugged the tiger because they put the tiger in the back seat."* Said the warden of the Park, *"You don't travel with the tiger in the back seat. They get hyper. They get motion sickness. They get upset. A tiger would rather run and walk rather than ride in a car."*

SOURCE: *The Washington Post*, 4 December 2002

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Author Linda S. Godfrey was born in Madison, Wisconsin, was raised in Milton and currently resides with her husband in rural Elkhorn. Godfrey is a professional artist, cartoonist, teacher, and writer. Her newspaper articles have garnered several awards, including first place best feature story from the National Newspaper Association in 1995 and 1998.

Her current book, *The Poison Widow* is published by Prairie Oak Press and tells the diabolical and true story of petite and mild-mannered Myrtle Schauder, a model wife and mother from Whitewater, Wisconsin, who poisoned her husband with strichnine, then blamed her lover. Next, she started over with a new family in a new state, conveniently forgetting to mention the sordid events that ended her previous marriage. How could Myrtle keep her shocking past a secret over all the decades? The book reveals all!

There are, however, other and distinctly stranger events afoot in darkest Wisconsin, including the macabre saga of the Beast of Bray Road - that is to be the subject of Godfrey's next book, as she reveals to Nick Redfern.

**NR:** What is the background, Linda, to the story of the Beast of Bray Road?

**LG:** The story first came to my attention in about 1991 from a woman who had heard that there were rumors going around here in Elkhorn, and particularly in the High School, that people had been seeing something like a werewolf, a wolf-like creature or a wolf-man. They didn't really know what it was. But some *were* saying it was a werewolf. And that werewolf tag has just got used because I think people didn't know what else to call it. And these days you have so much Hollywood influence that it colors your thinking about your observations. So when anybody sees something that's an out of place animal, you get those images. I started checking it out. I talked about it with the editor at *The Week* newspaper here, which I used to work for. He said: "Why don't you check around a little bit and see what you hear." This was about the end of December and being a weekly newspaper that I worked for, we weren't really hard news. We were much more feature oriented. So I asked a friend who had a daughter in high school and she said: "Oh, yeah, that's what everybody's talking about." So, I started my investigations and got one name from the woman who told me about it and she was also a part-time school bus driver. In my first phone call to the bus-driver, she told me that she had called the County Animal Control Officer. So, of course, when you're a reporter, anytime you have a chance to find anything official, that's where you go. I went out to see him and, sure enough, he had a folder in his file draw that he had actually marked "Werewolf," in a tongue-in-cheek way. It wasn't, by any means, that he believed it was a werewolf, but people had been phoning in to him and said they'd been seeing something. They didn't know what it was; and from their description, that's what he had put. So, of course, that made it a news story. When you have a public official, the County Animal Control Officer, who has a folder marked "Werewolf," that's news! Very unusual. We just

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took off from there and I kept finding more witnesses. At first they all wanted to stay private; and I remember talking about it with the editor and we thought we would run the story because it would be over in a couple of weeks. But the story got picked up by Associated Press, and once it hit AP everything broke loose and people were going crazy. All the Milwaukee TV stations came out and did stories and they dug until they found the witnesses and they got them to change their minds and go on camera – which they later much regretted. And which I kind of regret because it really made them reluctant and kind of hampered the later investigation. But what they were all mostly saying was they had seen something which was much larger than normal, sometimes on two legs and sometimes on four, with a wolfish head – and some described it as a German Shepherd-like head, pointed ears, very long, coarse, shaggy and exceptionally wild-looking fur. One thing they all mentioned is that it would turn and look at them and gaze fearlessly or leer at them; and it was at that point that they all got really frightened. Everybody who has seen it – with the exception of one – has been extremely scared because it's so out of the ordinary. It was something they couldn't identify and didn't appear to be afraid of them. It would just casually turn around and disappear into the brush. It was never just out in the open where it didn't have some sort of hiding place. There was always a cornfield or some brush or some woods. So, that was pretty much the start of it.

Then once that got out, I started finding other people who called me and got in touch with me and I sort of became the unofficial clearinghouse. And we called it the Beast of Bray Road because I've always been reluctant to call it a werewolf. The original sightings were in an area known as Bray Road, which is outside of Elkhorn.

NR: Can you expand upon the theories as to what may lay behind the Beast of Bray Road?

LG: Everybody seems to have an opinion about this that they're extremely eager to make known and defend. I personally don't think there are enough facts for anybody to come to a conclusion. I have a couple of dozen sightings, at least, to go by. A few of them are second-hand and they date back to 1936. And they aren't all around Bray Road. Quite a number of them are in the next county, Jefferson, and they extend well into Jefferson County. I've had a woman write me who insists it's a wolf. And I think a lot of people subscribe to that theory, that, yes, it's definitely a wolf and can't be anything else. But that doesn't really explain the large size. A lone wolf can travel by itself; and there *are* wolf packs in North-Western Wisconsin. Except this has been seen over so many years and with that range. There's another possibility: I think a lot of these people are seeing different things. And that when they heard somebody else talk about something, there's a tendency to say, "Oh, that must be what I saw." There's really no way to know. And there are differences in some of the sightings. I've had a lot of people ask me: "Are you sure this isn't Bigfoot?" Most of the sightings really don't sound like Bigfoot. But a couple of them do. There's one man who saw it in the sixties in a different area of the county, who insists positively that he saw a Bigfoot and that has been written up in the book. He doesn't mind anyone saying he saw Bigfoot but he doesn't want anyone saying he saw a werewolf. And the terrain around here isn't really the typical sort of Bigfoot terrain. We do have woods and a big state forest but it's a narrowband of state forest. It's a lot of prairie and is not like what you would think a Bigfoot would live in. But you never know. I've also had the baboon theory, which I finds extremely unlikely. We've had all sorts of theories: mental patients escaping or some crazy guy running around. A hoaxter is another theory, that it's

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somebody running around in a werewolf suit. One or two could have been that but I tend to have my doubts about that one because the incidents are very isolated and not close together. One of the sightings was on Halloween, but that's also one of the people that got a really good look at it and they're sure it wasn't a human in a costume. Otherwise, most of them have been really in remote locations, where, if you were going to hoax, the person would have to have been sitting out in the cold just waiting for somebody to come along. So if it is a hoaxter, my hat's off to them. But I tend not to think that's the case. I don't rule it completely out because once publicity gets out things like that can happen.

**NR:** Are all the reports of a single creature or has it been seen in pairs or packs?

**LG:** The only report...and it's a second-hand report...came from two hunters quite a bit farther north who saw what looked like two dog children standing up in the woods. They were too scared to shoot when they saw them. They were not tall: they were juvenile looking, standing upright, which is what scared them. But otherwise it's just been a single creature.

**NR:** Is there a tie-in with the werewolf legends as far as the creature being seen when the moon is full?

**LG:** Well, most of the sightings I receive aren't recent and so people can't remember too well what the moon was like. But most of the sightings occur around the Fall when the cornfields get big and there's really good hiding cover.

So that's anywhere from late August through November. And I've had some sightings from the Spring. But there are other theories as well. Occasionally I'll get letters from people who

are lycanthropes; their theory is that this is an immature, real werewolf and it cannot control its transformation and that's why it allows itself to be seen occasionally. They are completely convinced of that. And there are people who believe it's a manifestation of satanic forces, that it's part of a demonic thing. They point to various occult activities around here. There are people who try to link it to UFOs. Then there's the theory it's just a dog. One woman, a medium, thought that it was a natural animal but didn't know what it was. But there are a lot of people out here that do wolf-hybridizations and I've thought to myself that if you took something like a Russian wolfhound, which is huge and extremely shaggy and bred it to a wolf maybe you'd get something like that. But that doesn't explain the upright posture. There's also the Indian theory, that it's a Windigo.

**NR:** You have a book out on your investigations: can you give us some details of this?

**LG:** The working title of the book is *Tailing the Beast of Bray Road* and it's scheduled for release in the Fall and the publisher is Trails Media Incorporated. Part of the angle of the book is looking at this as a sociological phenomenon and how something that a number of people see turns into legend; and it has become that, a little bit. I'm still perfectly happy to leave it an open mystery; I don't have a feeling that it has to be pinned down.

**NR:** Will the publication of the book mark the end of your involvement in the Bray Road werewolf story and will you move on to something else?

**LG:** I don't think people will let me move on! I thought I would have moved on eight years ago; but people continue to contact me and I try to help them as much as I can.

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## Spawn of Cthullu

EDITOR'S NOTE: Over the past year we have been amassing a veritable archive of stories involving squids and octopi – some of them new species, others just weird. Since August last year we have been trying to find room to do these stories justice, and each issue there has been almost a stand up fight between Richard and me when I had to put them off to the next issue. Finally, we have room and I hope that you all agree that it was worth the wait. Thanks, by the way, to Loren Coleman, Rachel Carthy, Tom Anderson and others for their help in amassing this collection.

## Offal of lofall

Richard Prine – a fisherman – was amazed when he found an enormous dead squid washed up on Lofall Beach. "What it looked like was a pair of coveralls," Prine said. "It turned out to be a 7½-foot squid I didn't know anything like that existed around here." The 85-pound squid was apparently very recently deceased, since only its tentacles had been nibbled at by other marine life. Prine fisheries biologist Paul Dorn. The two men packed it in formaldehyde in a 32-gallon bucket. The squid now

resides at the University of Washington School of Aquatics and Fisheries Sciences, where collections manager Katherine Pearson said it should be valuable for research.

Large squid come the school's way occasionally, but generally not in good condition. A fishing boat in Alaska scooped up the last squid the department acquired, and the fisherman had already gutted it. *Moroteuthis robusta* are common in deep water off the Pacific coast. When they die, they rise to the surface and float into Puget Sound with the tide. A crew had recently recovered another giant squid near Point No Point., 5 to 6 feet long, it was smaller than the Lofall squid, but such a good specimen that it will be preserved and displayed at the aquarium. SOURCE: *The (Washington) Sun*. 17.7.02

## Decapod deception

What appeared to have been the type specimen for a new species of giant squid was washed up on a beach in Hobart, Tasmania in July 2002. The squid weighs up to 250 kilograms and, including tentacles, measured almost 18 meters (60 feet), the Australian Broadcasting Corp. reported. Scientists at the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery were reportedly studying the squid to determine if it was a new species after identifying several new features. It was certainly an *Architeuthis* spp but whether it is a new species remains to be seen. "*It's definitely of the giant squid group, which is exciting enough,*" the museum's senior curator of Zoology, David Pemberton said in the ABC report. "*But it does have some features about it which we're unsure about and we've called some specialists in from university to help decide, but it looks like it could be different.*"

It is traditionally thought that giant squid are deep-sea animals, and some species do live at depths up to three kilometres. But the Tasmanian animals appear to inhabit shallower waters, leading researchers to wonder just how close to the surface they are coming.

"*It gives some credence to the old timers,*" commented Dr Pemberton, of the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, referring to fears of some fisherman of sailing south because of the folklore that giant squid were there.

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## teeny tentacles

Although the Tasmanian squid sadly turned out not to be a new species, in September last year it turned out that dozens of new species of octopus could be found in century-old jars of alcohol on museum shelves in Paris and Washington, and in fisherman's nets and off the coasts of Indonesia, Senegal and the Caribbean. Zoologists were amazed to discover that there were dozens of species of tiny octopuses which were once believed to be babies of their larger relatives. Described by their discoverers as Lilliputian, some of the pygmy species are smaller than the hatchlings of the bigger and better known octopus. Each of the pygmies is about the size of a thumbnail, with weights measured in tenths of a gram, making them tiny even compared with the inches-high characters in *Gulliver's Travels*.

While the researchers are not formally presenting their findings until next year after gathering more data, other top experts in the field who know of their results say these small octopuses are a very important discovery. These newly recognized pygmies appear to lurk in tropical waters all over the globe, and their diversity is making scientists rethink what they know about octopi.

*"The new lower size limits with these octopuses now seem to go to really interesting and almost unlikely degrees,"* said Dr. Sigurd von Boletzky of the Arago Laboratory in Banyuls-sur-Mer, France, a marine zoologist who works extensively with pygmy squid. *"This is same kind of record breaking you'd see at the other end of the size scale with giant squid."*

SOURCE: *New York Times*, 24.9.02

## requiem for a titan

Sadly, however, Loren Coleman announced in early November that "The Smithsonian has confirmed that these initial media reports were unreliable, and that the giant squid was indeed an Architeuthis, and unlikely to be a new species.". Oh well. SOURCES: CNN July 22, 2002, ABC News July 20, 2002, Loren Coleman pers.comm..

As the summer of squid made its way into a cephalopodic autumn the reports still came in. In early September it was announced that the first example in the world of a mature male giant squid – had been

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caught 350 metres down in the deep waters off the northern Spanish coast. A five-metre tentacle was caught in these waters in 1999 that scientists reckoned came from a squid 10 metres long, though they stress the monster can grow to double that size. The scientists' aim, in the kraken project, eagerly followed throughout Europe, is to film the world's first images of the creature in its natural habitat on the deep ocean floor below 550 metres.

However, the story doesn't end there. Over the next few weeks two (or three – depending on which report you read) dead *Architeuthis* were found off the Spanish coast. "The increased sightings of dead giant squid could be due to various factors, from (military) manoeuvres to pollution and global warming," Angel Guerra, of the Spanish Institute of Scientific Research, told *Reuters* as he dissected one of the squid in an attempt to establish why it had died. SOURCES: *The Independent*, 16 September 2002; *Reuters* 16<sup>th</sup> October 2002;

## Cthullu rising

Just before Christmas Michael Vecchione of the National Marine Fisheries Service and the National Museum of Natural History in Washington described a new species of enormous squid that grows 23 feet long and lives more than 3,000 feet under the ocean, and which has been spotted all over the world -- in the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic, Pacific, and Indian oceans.

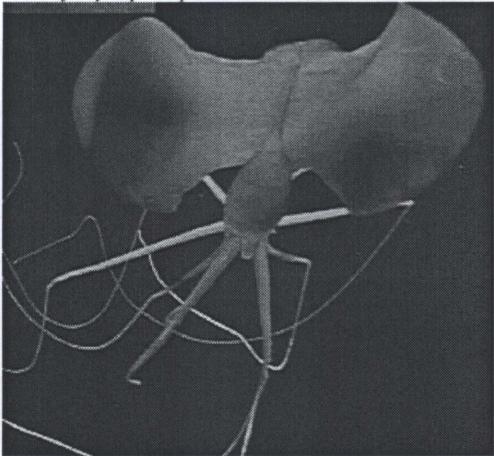
"These are real mystery," said Vecchione. "They behave strangely but they also look really weird."

Vecchione, admitted that no-one has actually captured one of the odd squid yet, so it has not been named, but he was effusively enthusiastic about the creatures.

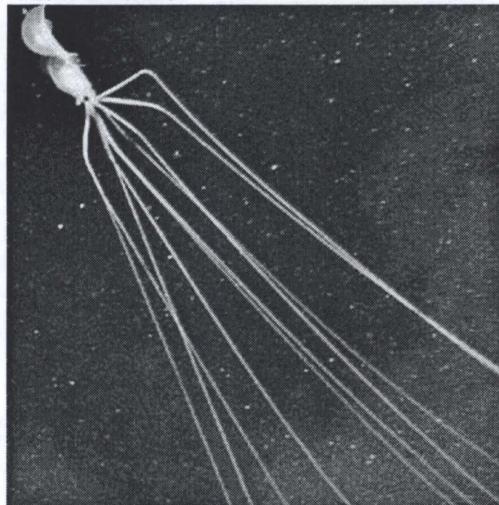
"This is well beyond a new species. New species are a dime a dozen. This is fundamentally different."

Vecchione said the squid do not act or look like other squid, which tend to be quick-moving and highly visual. Instead of having two arms and eight

tentacles, the new squid has 10 appendages that all look alike. "The really long skinny arms are so much longer than the squid's body," he said. "We don't know of any cephalopod that has arms like that."



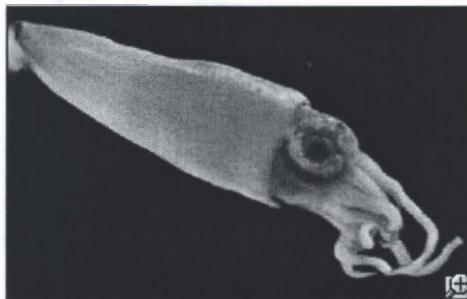
The CFZ verdict is just that they are truly weird. Richard started muttering Lovecraftian nonsense but the rest of us ignored him. SOURCES: *Science*; *Yahoo News* et. al. 20.12.02



These pix come from those jolly nice guys at the Copyright Liberation Front... sorry

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## ink infants



Over a year ago researchers who have spent months off the coast of New Zealand announced that they had managed to capture some living baby specimens. Steve O'Shea of New Zealand's National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research, in Wellington, decided to take a novel approach and hunt for baby, or juvenile giant squid, which are roughly the size of an ant.

When their search for juvenile giant squid began, they used trawl nets in what seemed the most logical place, the deep ocean. But they found only one squid and it died quickly. Later research back on land revealed that albatross, which feed on animals at the surface in open waters, at times eat tiny giant squid larvae, meaning that at earlier stages in life the creatures are not confined to the deep, where their parents live.

So, the team mounted a new expedition early in 2001 that focused on surface waters closer to New Zealand's shore. They hit a jackpot of 14 juvenile giant squid, some of which they were able to keep alive and observe briefly in tanks onboard their ship.

Unfortunately, all were dead by the time the ship reached port, but DNA analyses proved that the animals were in fact baby giant squid.

O'Shea believes the larvae died because they were not given the right food or light levels in the shipboard tanks. He says the group has now

solved these problems through work with other juvenile deep-sea squid.

Armed with this knowledge, O'Shea is confident he and his team will be able to get living juveniles to aquariums on land and raise them as soon as they can get back out to capture more, a project currently in the planning stages. The ultimate goal is to raise squid until their bodies grow to about ten feet long.

The CFZ would refer anyone interested to Arthur C Clarke's 1953 novel *The Deep Range* which featured a hunt for a living giant squid together with lots of derring do from the golden age of classic sci fi.

## Atrocity exhibition



In January 2002 various newspapers reported the first giant squid to be caught off the UK for 53 years. It is now on show at the National Marine Aquarium in Plymouth. The 3.15 metre long female, was netted by an Aberdeen based trawler..

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## california dreaming



The best headline of the year must have been "*Giant mutant squid invade California*" which accompanied a story about the appearance of hundreds of jumbo squid that were being washed up along the San Diego coastline.

The jumbo flying squid, which are normally found in their natural habitat of the eastern Pacific Ocean, have been swarming into California waters.

Biologists are puzzled as to why the apparently healthy squid are being washed up dead in the surf.

Some believe the arrival of the squid, whose scientific name is *Dosidicus gigas*, is related to El Nino. SOURCE: BBC News Sunday, 28 July, 2002 (although I have a sneaking suspicion that the silly headline is the responsibility of Rachel Carthy).

The story was followed by a report in the Australian science journal, *Australasian Science* claiming that "squid have overtaken humans in terms of total bio-mass. That means they take up more space on the planet than us."

There really is absolutely nothing that the editorial team can add to that claim except to wonder how on earth it can be substantiated when we don't know anything much about the biology of many of the larger species – let alone how many there are.

It just goes to prove what we have always known – that you can get quoted in the paper with whatever u say as long as it is stupid enough!

## Talking of stupid...

From the *Weekly World News* on 27 Aug 2002:

### GIANT SQUID WASHES UP ON SHORE & USES RESTROOM!

A FREAKISH giant squid weighing 550 pounds washed ashore in Tasmania -- and stunned eyewitnesses by crawling into a nearby restroom and cleaning its tentacles in the sink!

It hauled itself onto the beach, crawled into a public restroom, turned on the faucets and splashed soap and water on its body to clean itself up," said marine biologist Dan Tetherton.

The squid also splashed cold water in its face -- perhaps it was trying to get some salt water out of its eye," Tetherton speculated.

Then the 10-armed creature left and went back to the sea."

## The kraken wakes

One of the most bizarre stories to have reached us in recent months occurred after a French yacht taking part in the race for the Jules Verne round-the-world sailing trophy reported an encounter with one of the most mysterious denizens of the ocean – the giant squid. Veteran yachtsman Oliver de Kersauson, at the helm of the trimaran Geronimo, said the three-hulled boat was

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hit by strange vibrations, so he sent a crew member below deck to try to identify what was wrong. "Suddenly he saw something moving," de Kersauson said. "It was tentacles. The squid was pulling really hard, so we put the boat about and when we came to a stop the tentacles let go. We saw it behind the boat, and it was enormous. I have been sailing for 40 years, and I have never seen the like,"

Crew member Didier Ragault, is quoted as claiming that: ""the tentacles were as thick as my arm wearing an oil-skin, and I immediately thought of the damage it could do. When we saw it behind the boat it must have been seven, eight or nine meters long (ca. 26 feet)."  
he said.

A bizarre lexilink appears in the name of the race itself. Jules Verne was one of the first authors to describe an encounter with one of these colossal cephalopods in his book *20,000 Leagues under the sea* over a hundred years ago.

## A mountain walked..or stumbled

Just as we were going to press, Steve O' Shea announced another astounding discovery – a new species of squid that may be even bigger than *Architeuthis*.



The first example of *Mesonychoteuthis hamiltoni* was retrieved virtually intact from the surface of the Antarctic ocean. O'Shea is quoted as saying: "All we knew prior to this specimen coming through was that this animal lived in the abyssal environment down in Antarctica. Now we know that it is moving right through the water column, right up to the very surface and it grows to a spectacular size."

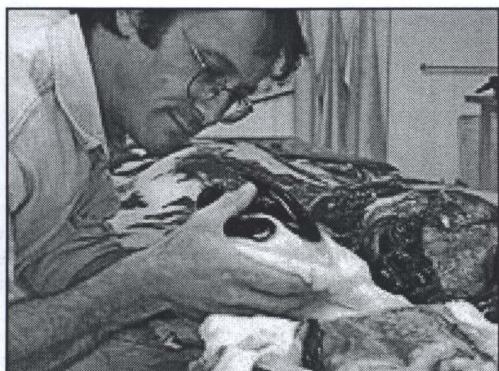
*Mesonychoteuthis hamiltoni* was first identified in 1925 after two arms were recovered from a sperm whale's stomach.

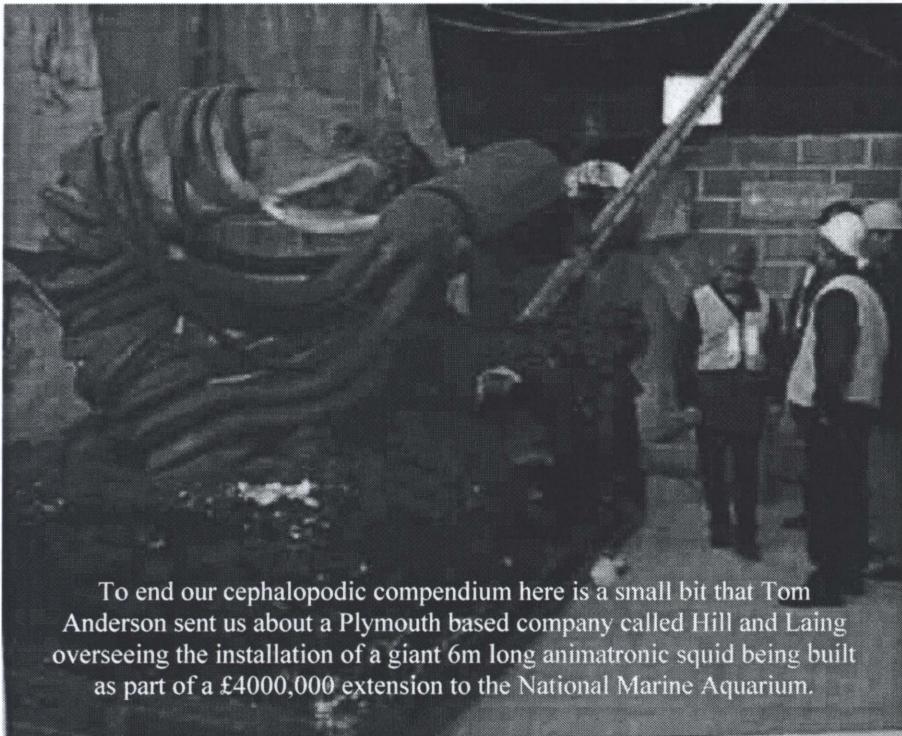
Dr O'Shea said:

"Now we can say that it attains a size larger than the giant squid. Giant squid is no longer the largest squid that's out there. We've got something that's even larger, and not just larger but an order of magnitude meaner."

This squid has one of the largest beaks known of any squid and also has unique swivelling hooks on the clubs at the ends of its tentacles. It is suggested that the creature be named the Colossal Squid.

If these squid are more widespread than has hitherto been thought it could answer many of the questions about attacks on boats and even humans by squid that seem to dwarf *Architeuthis dux*. Whatever comes to pass it seems certain that there is a lot more to learn about the largest and most frightening predators on the planet. SOURCE: BBC Online, 2.4.03





To end our cephalopodic compendium here is a small bit that Tom Anderson sent us about a Plymouth based company called Hill and Laing overseeing the installation of a giant 6m long animatronic squid being built as part of a £4000,000 extension to the National Marine Aquarium.

## AMERICAN ANOMALIES:

From Wampus Cat to Windigo

by

Amy McCormick.

From the first records of man's coming to the west there have been tales of the things glimpsed in dark woods at night, or encountered by travellers on lonely roads. Things unknown, unlooked for, half-seen and half-guessed in the failing light beneath the trees. Things whispered by firesides, their purpose and provenance inexplicable.

Down through the long years of history these things continued to appear, and do so today, their beginnings unrecorded. Spirits and demons, monsters, ghosts, and strange beasts populated the hills and plains long before the coming of men to their domain. Waiting perhaps, for the perfect night under wind and star to appear suddenly, and vanish again into unknown places. They wait there still. Travellers saw these things most often, on lonely roads and forest trails from which they told their stories to their listeners. In the vast forests far to the north of America, they saw monsters, half-men with glowing eyes who stalked the quiet woodlands, hauntings of the forests of the north.

They called them 'me-no-hah' and 'sasquatch'. They told and stories about them, rooting them in place time, wondering at their height and

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strength, and their strange connection to humankind. The Abenaki people called them 'wild men', and believed they were the brothers of humanity, long ago resigned to a life among the trees, like the woodwoses of western Europe. The Salish called them demons, and believed they hunted men and waylaid travellers, stealing children and killing crops, capable of calling down great storms to hide their tracks. But whatever they were named, they continued to be seen, along paths through the forest, leaving their giant tracks in the snow. And so the story comes down to us; 'bigfoot' we call these 'wild men', and count him peaceful and unthreatening, a reminder of humanity's own forgotten past before he left the trees. Still he is seen today, a great hulking shape along woodland trails, highways now, caught in the headlights of passing vehicles. His brothers too, less gentle than he are seen and spoken of still in the high, cold places of the world; Yeti, Alma, Abominable Snowman. Still more of his family wander freely through swamplands in the south, mistaken for men or apes until his distinctive huge footprints are found in the soft mud of the bottoms. He is part of the land, a spirit encountered in lonely places where nature is not yet captive.

But not all is so peaceful or tranquil, many of the first people feared these things, spirits or monsters as they deemed them. Tied to geography, they turn up in climatic crisis, a manifestation, some say, of the anger of the elements. The Cree people of Canada and the northern United States name such spirits 'windigo', and fear them. Windigo lives only in the remotest parts of the north, in caves and forests beset most of the year in deep-piled snow. The forests are in his keeping and his thrall, and he commands the wind to speak with his voice. Lone travellers in such hostile country must take every caution, lest they hear his call, for there is no refusing. The Windigo is huge, a towering skeletal figure with a heart of ice and a mind of evil cunning. He is invisible, and he is hungry. The father of all Windigo's was born long ago in the primeval forests when a warrior became lost in the wilderness, and in his desperation he cannibalised his fellow travellers. Since that day his hunger is never satisfied, and in his age he grows ever stronger and more powerful, seeking always to create more like himself. To this end he calls the unwary from his lair in the trees,

inflicting them with dread windigo fever. The victim suffers from nightmares, from unbearable pain in his feet and a burning in his legs that cause him to lose his reason and run wild into the woods. And there the Windigo captures him, to devour or reshape in his own image. Scavengers follow him, ravens and wolves, waiting for the spoils of his feast – an eye or a head. Many are the tales of the lucky who escaped, of the terrible voice of the Windigo, calling so that only his chosen victim can hear, and the strange scent on the wind that only his victim can smell.

The King of the Windigo's lives in a cave thirty miles from the Windigo River, most powerful of his breed. Over the years the bravest shamans of the Cree tribe sought out these creatures to destroy them with magic, and save their people from predation. Only silver axe in his icy heart can kill the Windigo; his body must be dismembered and buried in separate places, or his spirit will find them, and join them together, and he will return more terrible than before. He is a spirit of the ice and cold of the north, the traditional direction of all evil things.

The south is no haven however. In the deep bottomlands and marshes there live things rumoured to be hostile to humankind, waiting only for their chance to strike. Along the great north-south roadways paved in the early part of the last century there dwell innumerable spectres and unimaginable beasts. Along an old and seldom used roadway, running from Pennsylvania in the north to Georgia in the south, night-time travellers report an uneasiness, a certain dread at the prospect of following this road to its end. Fatal accidents are common here, despite its disuse. The road is straight and well-maintained, but an unaccountable number of drivers report being suddenly forced off the road by an unseen force, or the wheel wrenched from their grasp by unseen hands. The angry dead of those killed along the roadway are said to be responsible, but others tell a different tale. Long before the road was laid and the constant clatter of wheels went past, the Cherokee spoke of a strange creature in this area, a menacing being in animal shape. It guards the land, they said; it does not like the intrusion of men into its territory. 'Yakehtan Amai' they called it in their language – 'Red Dog Fox' in ours. But this is not its only name. It appears at the scene of trauma along the road, its tall spindly shape seen briefly in the headlights of the startled drivers. Too tall to be a dog,

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too skinny for a wolf, but dog-like, nonetheless, standing some three-feet high, with coarse red hair and a grinning mouth. 'Fence Rail Dog' it has been called, for its height and its thinness. It carries with it an aura of silent menace. Though it may growl or bark, no sound comes from its throat.

Silent too, are the living dogs of this region when they pass him by. They will not follow his track, nor sound to their masters when they come upon his trail. Neither will they follow those other canines so often seen in this region, the black dogs that haunt the ancient cemeteries scattered about the area. Dogs in folklore are often bad omens, their howl a sign of death approaching, their raised hackles a sure token of a ghost in the room. And like the other strange beings mentioned here, these black dogs are bound to their location, an indelible part of it and constrained by it. Most often these graveyard dogs are found in old slaves cemeteries, forgotten and abandoned, weeds choking the crumbling headstones. The dogs make their presence known by a peculiar chill down the spine of visitors. They guard the gates like Cerberus, letting no soul in or out. Counted protectors of the graves, they are quick to anger and punish those who would disturb the sleeping dead or defile their tombs. Many stories speak of the bloodied body of a would-be vandal, found in the morning by a sexton, and the unmistakable scratches on the corpse's face. Often they are said to protect the grave of a witch or a murdered child. They carry chains about their necks, and emit a sulphurous stench when they appear. Then, they sink into the ground at the first sign of dawn, their huge blazing eyes the last to vanish. Wounds inflicted by these dogs will never heal, and their gaze brings sickness and fever. At times they appear headless, or their feet will not touch the ground as they run silently around the perimeter of the cemetery. Only running water or the graveyard's boundary can stop their pursuit. For they are imprisoned there, bound by a pact to the Devil or simply a restless soul, always vigilant.

These then, are some of the spirits of the land, first remarked by the nations before the white men, later incorporated into his stories and passed down to his children. In wonder and fear man travelled the new world, finding along the way people and stories he never knew before, and other things besides.

Though the land seemed empty on arrival, it was not so. And though Europeans knew they were the first to set foot on this land, so the Indians knew the same. There were things here before them, still hiding in the trees. And when men have gone, and the earth has forgotten him completely, these things will remain.

The last cougar west of the Mississippi River was shot by a bounty hunter in the year 1841. He was paid a bounty of two dollars for its ears in accordance with the government's program of complete elimination of this predatory cat. But not all were lost in those times. Some fled west of the river, fording at low crossings and natural bridges, or sought refuge in the deep woods and high mountains far from their human predators. Always a shy and wary creature, the cougar now became a ghost, a silent wraith stalking through its former territory always on the alert for the scent of its deadliest foe.

The cat's name was legion – cougar, puma, mountain lion, panther, painter, catamount. Though officially extinct in the swamplands of the south, it was till seen there by a few who wandered far from human habitation into the wilderness. Isolated homesteaders heard its distinctive high-pitched call in the darkness, always said to resemble a woman's scream or a baby's wail. Ranchers living far from their neighbours sometimes found evidence of the cougar's passing in slaughtered livestock, sheep or young cattle partially consumed and killed in the cat's unmistakeable fashion, with a single bite to the back of the neck severing the spinal cord. No dog or wolf can kill so cleanly. The cougar's tawny coat caught the dim light under the eaves of the deep woods, and hunters brought back stories of the cats. The Wampus Cat, they named it in the south, a supernatural creature, the last survivor of a species deliberately hunted to its death.

It appeared in northern forests as well, tracking hares across the snow and leaving its footprints behind it – the deep round imprint of its paw, with the claws retracted. But not all cougars were created equal. Many hikers, campers, and hunters began to see cats that science said could not be – cats with striped or spotted coats, black coats, cats that seemed to vanish into the very air as soon as they were sighted. Melanism, a recessive genetic trait which causes a solid black coat colour, is rare in some exotic cats, and thought to be

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non-existent in the cougar. Leopards and jaguars alone show this with any frequency, and only in the forested regions of their habitation, in east India and west Africa, far from the rocky soil of the northern woods of the United States. But still the strangely coloured cats were seen, more and more every year. They travelled their old range from the Atlantic coast to the Mississippi, staying in the shadows, hunting deer and occasionally livestock along the way. They were seen on desolate highways bordering forests, caught briefly in the headlights as they sprinted across the road. And always, in the silence of the night, their scream carried miles in the still, cold air.

Other, larger cats joined the hunt. Lions were seen in Iowa and New Jersey; leopards in Texas and Florida; a tiger in Massachusetts and later, New York. Witnesses were adamant about what they'd seen; police officers and hunters fired on the cats in the rural areas, with spent shells to prove their tale, and tracks in the woods that were too large for comfort. Small towns bordering the wild were thrown into panic at the tales of the cats stalking their homes, children were kept home from school, posse's organised to hunt down the interlopers. But they did not succeed. No cat was ever brought alive or dead from the woods or the hills, and the legend grew. Some called them ghosts, and shuddered when they heard the scream far-off; some called them pets, escaped from menageries or circuses and roaming free. Trackers followed their trails, losing them unaccountably in the forest. The cats were smart, they said – they covered their tracks too well, they hid in plain sight in the trees.

Wildlife departments, game services, forestry officials, all denied knowledge of the cats, citing 1841 as the year they vanished from the east. But the stories could not be denied, and the evidence was mounting. Populations far from the cities and suburbs knew the truth – the cats had returned, or perhaps they had never left at all. Farmers watched their stock more closely, and trained their guard dogs to be fiercer. Hunters and hikers were more cautious in the forest, refusing to turn their back to the trees for fear the cat should spring from behind. And the stories spread, and the people accepted that the cats were among them again after a brief respite, hardly marking any new tale of the scream in the

woods or the strange coloured creatures stalking the hills. While they may be denied by officials, their existence is proven to those who live in their range, borne out by the large, clawless tracks left in the mud and in the snow, and the carcasses of sheep and cattle bearing the single bite to the throat.

Not all strange beasts are thought to be animals. Many are the tales of human figures haunting the rural areas of the country, seen along roadways or half-seen amid the forests of the region. Some bold few venture even into the heart of human habitation, striding proudly down city streets. The most common of these phantoms, yet often the most elusive, are the albinos of legend. Albinism is a rare recessive trait in most mammals, including humans, by which the skin cannot produce pigment. In ages past, those so afflicted were feared and persecuted for their white hair, their deathly pallor, their red eyes which could not look upon the sun. But the albinos of these tales were not the recluses of society – they travelled far from towns and cities and established themselves in tiny outposts on the edge of civilisation, defending their homes from prying eyes. They grew fierce and strange, forced to inbreed with their own kind due to isolation, or some say, preference. In the shacks they built deep in the woods where no other people dared to venture, they turned unspeakable practices through their long years of loneliness. Few are the little towns in the American woods that do not have such stories of the cannibals in their midst, warning their children from straying into the forests. For like the faeries of old, the albinos capture children, dropping on them from their lairs in the trees, and spiriting them away to some unknown place and fate. To be eaten, some said, or to be married off to their kin, producing deformed and freakish children who in their turn hunt more. They became the American Sawney Bean, but they were never captured, seldom seen, only whispered about in low voices by those living too near the eaves of the forests. Their pale figures were glimpsed like ghosts as they flit from tree to tree in the fading light. Only at night would they venture out from their caves and hovels – their pale skin could not withstand the light and the heat of the sun.

They had villages deep in the mountain caves, it was whispered, where they stored their victims and raised their children. On moonless nights the strongest among them left the protection of their homes and went out in

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search of more victims. Any disappearance in the area was blamed on these former circus folk, the refugees of freak shows who took up their abode in the secret places of the world. Certain roads and paths were avoided after dark, and any ruinous and crumbling house found deep in the woods was known to be their haunt. They and their descendants linger still, stories half-believed by children and those wary of wild places.

The Grinning Men first appeared some twenty years ago, their coming little marked except by those who saw their faces, and were afraid. Two boys saw a tall man in the darkness, standing still behind a tall fence, a grin on his face from ear to ear. Something sinister and unearthly in his expression caused them to run from him, bearing the story back to adults who searched for this creature and found him gone. No trace of him remained, no footprint to mark where he had stood. Later he was seen to follow other people down the dark streets, and vanish just as suddenly. A strange ghost possessed with some unholy mirth was come among the people. New Jersey, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, New York – little towns across these eastern states were troubled by the appearance of the Grinning Man. He was seen only in darkness, his features nondescript save for the huge grin he always sported. He spoke no word, and he never lingered long.

Extraterrestrial, ghost, demon, escaped asylum inmate – all these and more were ascribed to the grinning man. None knew where they had come from, or what their purpose was. They did not speak, and they moved strangely, in a stiff fashion as though their legs did not bend like human legs. Though in the shape of a man, many doubted he was at all human. A visitor from some other world, perhaps, or some other plane of existence. He's still seen today on dark nights in small towns. Children still whisper about him, huddled close in small groups, warning their friends not to stay too long in places where the streetlights cannot reach. A modern bogeyman, but one with a strange career.

His brethren are also seen from time to time – tall men in hoods who vanish by roadsides, thin men dressed in green with long fingers and bony knees. In the woods of Pennsylvania, the Green Man

haunts the disused roads, frightening motorists with his leering green visage. In Connecticut hooded figures walk the deserted streets past dark. The restless watch them from their windows, and draw the curtains closed. A hooded man was seen by several people in Massachusetts, appearing at the edge of town after the sun had set and making his slow way around the perimeter. He appeared to be searching for something. But what? He approached houses and other buildings, but never knocked at the doors. He preferred to scratch at sleeper's windows, often those on the second storey of the house.

Who are these strange tall men? Though many stories tell of them, none can explain them. No-one knows where they come from, where they are going, or where they'll turn up next.

AMY McCORMICK was born in Philadelphia and now lives in rural Pennsylvania. She attends Temple University where she studies biology and epidemiology. Her interests include cryptozoology, folklore and hauntings.

She is currently being stalked by Neil Arnold!

## **The Dragons of Scandinavia**

by Richard Freeman

In Viking lore there are two primary kinds of dragon.

The first is the familiar heraldic dragon also known as the firedrake. This is the nightmarish beast that springs into our minds when the word "dragon" is spoken. This *true* dragon was a gigantic, reptilian quadruped with vast bat like wings. It was armed with savage teeth and claws, but its most deadly weapon was the jets of white-hot flame it could gout at its victims. These creatures were credited with all manner of magickal powers and were almost impossible to kill. Covered in metallic scales, the dragon could only be defeated by striking its one vulnerable spot with an enchanted

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weapon. No two dragons had the same vulnerable spot. It was one of these monsters which finally killed the Viking hero Beowulf.

The second species of Norse dragon is less well-known but more wide spread. The *lindorm* was a limbless reptile of awesome dimensions. Instead of breathing fire, it would spew out a billowing cloud of poison gas. It was believed that lindorms began life as normal snakes, much in the same way that the Chinese believed that dragons started life as snakes. "Do not despise the snake because he has no horns. Who is to say he will not one day become a dragon?" goes an old proverb. These snakes apparently grew beyond all normal proportions, and as they grew bigger they took up residence in deep lakes. Eventually they became too large even for these, and took to the open sea were they became sea serpents. In the end their ever-growing mass dragged them to the bottom of the ocean.

This legend is interesting, for it supports the idea that the Shony can be found in both freshwater and seawater variations.

The largest lindorm in Viking legend was the infamous Jourmungandr or Midgaard serpent. This was one of the children of Loki, the father of lies, evil trickster, god and half-brother to the thunder god Thor. It was so huge that it encircled the world, holding its tail in its mouth. The Jourmungandr is said to kill Thor in Ragnarok, the time of the death of the Norse gods.

In later Christian days, somewhat smaller lindorms seemed to have a problem with religion. Actually, they were said to coil around churches and crush them. This odd belief seems to have come from Christians associating snakes with the devil, due to their interpretation of the Book of Genesis.

According to folklore, villagers specifically bred massive fighting bulls to tackle the lindorms. These battles usually led to the death of both combatants. Statues depicting these fights can actually be seen in several Scandinavian cities. This bull/lindorm conflict is strangely reminiscent of the stories of the "manotoro" or killer of bulls in the Amazon. This is supposed to be a snake so huge that it dwarfs the

largest anaconda. It is said to suffocate bulls in its coils then swallows them whole.

In 1555 Olaus Magnus the exiled Archbishop of Upplasa, then residing in Rome, published his book *Historia de gentibus serpentinrialibus*. This dealt with the monstrous serpents of Scandinavian waters. The most infamous was of gigantic size. "*They who in Works of Navigation, on the coasts of Norway, employ themselves in fishing or merchandise, do all agree this strange story. That there is a serpent there, which is of vast magnitude, namely 200 foot long, and moreover 20 foot thick; and is wont to live in rocks and caves toward the sea coast about Bergen, which will go alone from his holes in a clear night, in summer, and devour calves, lambs, and hog, or else he goes into the sea to feed on polyps, locusts, and all sorts of sea crabs. He hath commonly hair hanging from his neck a cubit long, and sharp scales, and is black, and he hath flaming, shining eyes. This snake disquiets the shippers, and he puts up his head on high like a pillar, and casteth away men, and he devours them; and this happeneth not, but it signifies some wonderful change of the Kingdom near at hand; namely the Princes shall die, or be banished; or some tumultuous wars shall presently follow.*"

Magnus records lindorms inland as well.

*"There is also another serpent of an incredible magnitude in a town called Moos (ie. Lake Mjosa), of the Diocese of Hammer, which as a comet portends change in all the World, so, that portends a change in the kingdom of Norway, as it was seen, Anno 1522, that lifts himself high above the waters, and rolls himself round like a sphere. This serpent was thought to be fifty cubits long by conjecture, by sight afar off: there followed this the banishment of King Christiernus, and great persecution of the Bishops; and it shew'd also the destruction of the Country."*

Nearly 200 years later, another cleric took up Maguns's reigns and continued his work. Eric Pontoppidan, the Bishop of Bergen (1752-1753), studied and collected stories of encounters with these creatures, mainly by fishermen and sailors. The Bishop devoted a whole chapter in his book *Natural History of Norway* to these monsters, and asked the question, are they man-eaters?

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"I return again to the most interesting inquiry concerning them, which is whether they do mankind any injury? And in what manner they may hurt the human species. Arndt Bernsen, in his Account of the Fertility of Denmark and Norway, p.308, affirms that they do; and says that the Sea-snake, as well as the Trold-whale, often sinks both men and boats. I have not heard any accounts of such an accident hereabouts, that might be depended on; but the North traders inform me of what has frequently happened with them, namely that a Sea-snake has raised itself up, and thrown itself across a boat, and sometimes even across a vessel of some hundred tons burden, and by its weight has sunk it down to the bottom. One of the aforesaid North traders, who says he has been near enough to some of these Sea-snakes (alive) to feel their smooth skin, informs me, that sometimes they will raise up their frightful heads, and snap a man out of a boat, without hurting the rest..."

It is said that they will sometimes fling themselves in a wide circle around a boat, so that the men are surrounded on all sides. This Snake, I observed before, generally appears on the water in folds or coils; and the fishermen, in a known custom in that case, never row towards the openings, or those places were the body is not seen, but is concealed under the water, if they did the Snake would raise itself up, and overset the boat. On the contrary, they row full against the highest part that is visible, which makes the snake immediately dive; and they are released from their fears."

Such was the fear instilled by these creatures that ships made special provision for an encounter.

"Of late our fishermen have found the way, in the warm Summer months, of providing themselves with castor, which they always carry with them when they go far out to sea: they shut it up in a hole in the stern, and if at any time they are particular apprehensive of meeting with the Sea-snake they throw a little of it overboard: for by frequent experience they know of a certainty, that it always avoids the drug."

The Trold-whale referred to seems to be a local name for the giant squid (*Architeuthis dux*). At one time this beast was every bit as legendary as the

lindorm - that is until specimens started turning up alive, kicking, and very dangerous along the coast of Newfoundland in the 1870s.

An example of a dramatic encounter with a lindorm at sea is recounted here from Pontoppidan's tome.

"Sir, in the latter end of August, in the year 1746, as I was on a voyage, on my return from Trondhjem, a very calm and hot day, having a mind to put in at Molde, it happened that when we arrived with my vessel within a mile of the aforesaid Molde, being a place called Jule-Naess, as I was reading in a book, I heard a kind of murmuring voice from amongst the men at the oars, who were eight in number, and observed that the man at the helm kept off from the land. Upon this I enquired what was the matter, and was informed that there was a sea serpent ahead of us. I then ordered the helmsman to keep the land again, and to come up with this creature of which I had heard so many stories. Though the fellows were under some apprehensions, they were obliged to obey my orders.

"In the meantime the sea-snake passed us by, and we were obliged to turn the vessel around to get nearer to it. As the snake swam faster than we could row, I took my gun, which was loaded with small shot, and fired at it; on this it immediately plunged under water. We rowed to the place it sank down (which in the calm might easily be observed) and lay upon our oars, thinking it would come up again to the surface; however it did not. Where the snake plunged down, the water appeared thick and red; perhaps the small shot might have wounded it, the distance being very little.

The head of this sea-serpent, which it held more than two feet above the surface of the water, resembled that of a horse. It was of a greyish colour, and the mouth was quite black, and very large. It had large black eyes, and a long white mane, which hung down over the surface of the water. Besides the head and neck we saw seven or eight folds, or coils, of this snake, which were very thick, and as far as we could guess there was a fathom's distance between each fold.

I related this affair in a certain company, and there was a person of distinction present, who desired that I would communicate to him an authentic detail of all

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that happened, and for this reason two of my sailors who were present at the time and place where I saw this monster, namely, NIELS PETERSEN KOPPER, and NEILS NEILSEN ANGLWIGEN, will appear in court, to declare on oath the truth of every particular herein set forth: and I desire the favour of an attested copy of the said description.

I remain, Sir, your obliged servant  
Lyon Ferry

Bergen, 21<sup>st</sup> February, 1751.

It seems unlikely that the shot did much damage to such a creature, even a comparatively small one as described here.

Over a century later, in the 1800s, the lindorm was still much in the news in Scandinavia. In 1885 Swedish scientist Gunnar Olaf Hylten-Cavallius wrote a book on the subject. In *On the Dragon, Also Called the Lindorm* he publishes 48 verbatim accounts of encounters with lindorms. Half of these are multiple-witness cases.

"In Varland (in southern Sweden)- and probably other parts of Sweden as well- a species of giant snakes, called dragons or lindorms, continues to exist. Usually the lindorm is about 10 feet long, but specimens of 18 or 20 feet have been observed. His body is as thick as a man's thigh; his colour is black with a yellow flamed belly. Old specimens wear on their necks an integument of long hair or scales, frequently likened to a horse's mane. He has a flat, round, or squared head, a divided tongue, and a mouth full of white, shining teeth. His eyes are large and saucer shaped with a frightfully wild and sparkling stare. His tail is short and stubby and the general shape of the creature is heavy and unwieldy."

The author goes on to say that it was an aggressive animal, hissing and writhing when alarmed, and raising itself up to six feet high when attacking. It lived in remote places like marshes, swamps, caves, and lakes. The lindorm was extremely hard to kill, and caused an appalling stench after death. Some of the witnesses included members of the Swedish parliament. Hyleten-Cavallius even distributed a

poster offering a reward for a specimen. The reward was never claimed.

What is not widely known is that the legendary folklorist and researcher Sabine Baring-Gould had an interest in these creatures, particularly in Iceland where they were known as skrimsl. Baring-Gould, who hailed from Devon, was perhaps the greatest chronicler of strange phenomena in his day. He was a true Fortean many years before the word was coined. A student of the Norse sagas and a member of the Norse Literary Society, he travelled the remoter parts of Iceland in 1860. It was here he came upon a sighting of a skrimsl that had occurred only days earlier in a lake near Skoradalsvatn. A farmer and his family observed a creature with a seal like head and two humps sunning itself on the surface. Gould was later sent a composite description of the skrimsl by some colleagues in Iceland.

"The skrimsl measures 46 feet long, the head and neck are 6 feet, the body 22 feet, and the tail 18 feet, according to the estimate of the farmers on the shore of the lake. The monster was seen the day before we arrived at Grudd, by the farmer of the place. His story and description of the fish were so remarkable that we instituted inquiries which resulted in our hunting out several individuals that had seen the monster. On one occasion it was observed by three farmers who reside on the shores of the lake, two of whom I met and questioned on the subject. One of these men produced a sketch of the creature, which he made whilst it was floating and playing on the surface of the water for half an hour.

I should have been inclined to set the whole story down as a myth, were it not for the fact that the accounts of all the witnesses tallied with remarkable minuteness, and the monster is said to have been seen not in one portion of the lake only but at different points."

Upon his return to Reykjavik, Baring - Gould met with an Icelandic scholar, Dr Hjaltalin. Hjaltalin did not believe in the skrimsl until he was shown the cadaver of one that had washed up on a beach near Largarflot. The bones were unlike those of a whale or any other creature known to inhabit the northern seas. The presence of bones also excludes the possibility of the carcass being that of a basking shark (*Cetorhinus*

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*maximus*). This creature is responsible for many pseudo-monster corpos that turn up occasionally.

Sharks do not have true bones but a skeleton of cartilage.

But are such creatures seen in Scandinavia today? The answer is yes! Many Scandinavian lakes are said to be inhabited by dragon like creatures. Chief among these is Lake Storsjö in Sweden. On Forson Island in the lake stands a megalith. Upon this ancient stone is pictured a lindorm swallowing its own tail. Along its body are written Viking runes. Legend says that the lindorm will remain in the lake, the deepest in Scandinavia, until someone deciphers the runes. Deciphered or not, it seems that a lindorm is still resident in Storsjön. The creature terrorised a couple, Rolf Larson and Irene Magnusson, on a fishing trip to the lake in 1976'

*"We were about 500 metres from land and we were going home when we passed a buoy. Suddenly some waves rocked the boat. 50 or 60 metres from us, between the land and the boat, something moved under the surface. Then it came up to the surface, not with a splash but with smooth waves. The part of the body we saw above the water was not more than 20-30 cm high and about 1 metre long, but from the amount of water it displaced we could see that it was a large object beneath the surface. I would like to compare it with an upside down boat, you only saw the keel of it. [Like an upturned boat' is exactly the way that the back of the Shony appeared to Mike as it was sticking out of the water during his own encounter off the coast of South Shields.] We could see it quite close. We had plenty of time to look at it. We had shut off the motor because we were fishing. The thing was swimming in half circles around our boat."*

*"From the beginning I stood completely still without really understanding what was going on. After some minutes I started the motor, but then Irene who had been quiet all the time shouted that I should immediately return to land. She was as pale as a corpse. We made for shore and the animal followed us for a time. We were doing perhaps 10 knots but the creature kept up with us. We returned to land and we could see the wake of the creature for 5 or 6 minutes as the water was so calm."*

The beast made an even more frightening appearance to two 11 year-old cousins, Cecilia and Elin Hemreus, who were playing in the lake in August 1997. Elin had swum out to a rock just offshore as Cecilia watched on. She became aware that her cousin was staring in horror at something in the water behind her. Turning about Elin saw a serpentine animal displaying an elongate neck and a series of humps. Elin swam for shore in terror, but the animal did not attack. It simply swam away.

In the summer of 1996, Gunn-Britt Widmark was on a cruise of the lake with a party of pensioners when the monster appeared. Luckily Widmark had a video camera and managed to capture a 10 to 12 metre row of grey humps as they moved across the lake's surface.

A further sighting recalls an appearance of the creature in October 1893, when the animal so frightened two girls that a professional whaler from Norway was brought in to tackle the monster, and a massive trap baited with a dead pig was placed in the lake. The monster avoided them both. The creature seems to have first appeared in 1820 when a farmer fishing on the lake claims his boat was followed by a huge animal. Aron Andersson from Hackas was taking a picnic when he saw the beast on land. It was reddish grey in colour with a white mane on the neck. It appeared to be sunning itself before eventually returning to the water.

Circa 1855 it was spotted by one Paul Andersson (no relation) and four other men. It moved so fast that it overtook their rowing boat. In the same year a man from Östersund said it had pursued his vessel and that it resembled an upturned boat.

In 1863 Jan Brumee and his family observed a dozen blackish humps whilst crossing the lake. Once again they followed the boat closely. They attempted to catch the monster but it proved too swift. He saw it again some eight years later.

*"I was out on the lake with my family and some friends. A rainstorm came up and we headed to shore. That's when an animal moved right past us. It was swimming at an incredible speed. The creature left a very large wake. I didn't give chase that last time, realising this thing had to be strong to swim that fast."*

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*With that sort of power, it could have overturned our boat."*

Towards the end of July, 1878, Eric Olsson and some colleagues were fishing on Storsjö when they saw what looked like a log in the path of their boat. Alarmed when the "log" resolved itself into a serpentine animal with a dog-like head, they made for a small island and pulled up the boat until the creature vanished.

Another man had a better look at the lindorm a year later. Martin Olsson, a mechanic at the Östersund sawmills, lived in a cabin beside the lake.

*"I was fishing near Froso Island when I got a strange feeling someone was watching me. I looked behind me and the lake creature was not more than forty metres from my boat. I dropped my pole and line in the lake when I saw it. The weather was bright and sunny and I got a good view of the animal. The neck was long, about as round as a man's body at the base where it came up out of the water. It tapered up about six feet to a snake like head that was larger than what I figured the neck could support. There was a hairy fringe just back of the neck, hanging down the back. This fringe-like ribbon was stuck close to the neck, possibly because of the wetness. The colour was greyish brown. The thing had two distinct eyes that were reddish in appearance. The body was not exactly black-but a sort of blackish rust colour in appearance. There were a couple of dark humps visible beyond the neck. Both of these humps, and the part that was out of the water, glistened in the sunlight. I did not see scales. There was a skin on the animal that resembled the skin of a fish.*

*I didn't want to alarm the beast but I did want to get away from it as quickly as possible. Moving very cautiously, I took my oars and pulled slowly away from the spot I became even more frightened when I had rowed about ten metres distance and the animal began to swim towards me. I stopped rowing and the thing just lay there in the water staring at me. This must have gone on for about five minutes. I'm uncertain because my mind was on everything but the passage of time. There was no*

*doubt in my mind this thing could have overturned my little boat. I thanked god when he dropped beneath the water and I saw a blackish hump move out in the opposite direction."*

In 1893, the monster terrified skaters when three metres of its head and neck smashed trough the ice between Froso Island and Östersund.

The focus switched back to salt water for a while in 1894. During an exceptionally hot July, two sea serpents blockaded the isolated fishing village of Erviken in Norway close to the border with Finland. The newspaper *Finmarkposten* reported that the towns residents came down to watch the sea-orms swimming back and forth in front of the harbour's entrance. Several fishermen admitted they had never seen anything so large in their voyages. The newspaper went on...

*"The sea serpent was dark yellow in colour, had a round body, and a length of at least 180 feet. It moved very fast through the water in serpentine coils. The head was about the size of a barrel, but rather more pointed in front, and immediately behind it the creature had a large ring situated between the head and the body, which seemed to be smooth and without fins."*

A whaling vessel from Hammerfest had met with three crews from fishing ships that had come into port babbling in terror about giant snakes. The whaler set out to engage the monsters but they had vanished by the time it arrived.

Meanwhile, in fresh water, the lindorm returned in 1896 when a newspaper reporter and his friends bravely rowed out to get a better view of the monster.

*"At first we thought the dark mass in the water was a boat that had turned over. We observed the mass for a few moments then realised it was the infamous monster of Lake Storsjö. I had just read about the sea-orm mentioned in olden times. I thought this creature could be a throwback to something that once lived in olden days. I talked my companions into rowing out on the lake where the serpent was making a lot of threshing manoeuvres, raising waves and disturbing the calmness of the lake." They observed a smooth-bodied, cinnamon coloured creature, showing several humps above the surface.*

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Lake Storsjo is not the only Scandinavian lake to play host to a lindorm. Lake Seljord in Norway is another hot-spot for sightings. According to legend, the lake's monster - known as the *seljordsorm* - once inhabited a much smaller mountain lake. Outgrowing its home, it migrated overland to Lake Seljord. Eiivind Fjodstuft saw the monster crawl ashore whilst he was fishing in 1920. He described it as black, 50 to 60 feet long, with a head like a crocodile.

In the summer of 1975, dentist Rolf Langeland started a practice in a small hamlet called Sandes close to the lake. Three days after his arrival, he was driving near the lake with his three children when they saw the seljordsorm. He brought his car to a halt as five huge humps broke the surface. Churning the water and moving at an amazing speed, the monster was some 30 to 50 metres in length, unless several specimens were swimming in line together this was a true titan.

On Easter Monday 1977 Ivar Hesmyr and his daughter Solveig were fishing from a small boat together with a neighbour's son. Suddenly three glistening humps rose from the water about 300 feet away.

Hesmyr estimated the length to be 30 feet. A serpentine head and neck rose up in front of the humps, and the creature began to swim away at a speed that caused waves to rock the boat.

Solveig began screaming and her father attempted to calm her. When he looked up again, the seljordsorm had vanished. His daughter said that the humps disappeared first, followed by the head and neck. When they reached shore, Hesmyr swore never to go back out on the lake again.

Another smaller Norwegian lake with a lindorm in residence is Rommen in south-western Norway, close to the Swedish border.

In 1929 Astrid Myrvold was fetching water for her mother when she saw something on the shore. In later life she likened it to a big, black, plastic pipe (though these did not exist then). It had a horse-like head and a fin on its tail. Disturbed by her presence,

it slithered into the lake drawing a large wake behind it. Astrid noticed it had protruding ears [or horns?]. She told her mother but was not believed. Hence she did not speak about her sighting until 1976 after a local man said he had also seen the monster.

On 30<sup>th</sup> of September 1976, at 1.30pm, Asbjorn Holmedal was driving a school bus near the lake. He noticed large waves coming ashore between the mainland and Bjornoya Island. He thought it might have been caused by a swimming moose. However, when he stopped the bus and got off in order to take a closer look he saw a massive animal in the water. He and 15 children, aged 8-15, saw it rise from the water causing a great commotion. It was 7-10 metres (23 - 33 feet) long. It had four metre-long humps around one to two metres apart. They protruded a foot or more above the surface. The beast submerged leaving the lake mirror calm again.

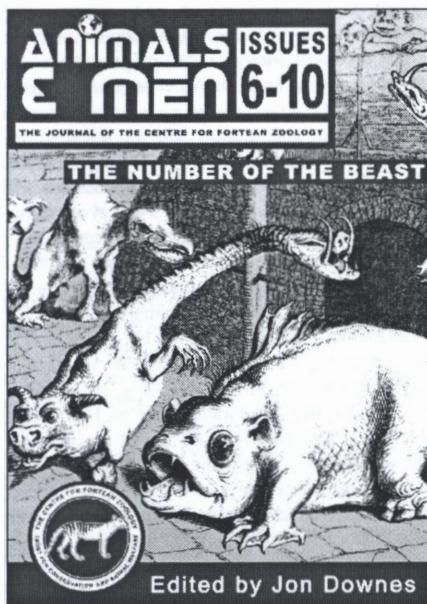
In July 1992, Bjorg Bohn and her husband and daughter were holidaying in a cabin beside Rommen. Looking out of the window, she saw a hump resembling an upturned boat some 15 meters (50 feet) from the shore. She made a drawing of the object and said it was patterned like the back of a crocodile. Both her husband and daughter also observed the animal before it dove beneath the waters, leaving a commotion in the shallows.

Well over forty other lakes in Scandinavia have been subject to similar sightings. Sea serpents are still seen in the area as well. In 1999 an amateur naturalist was walking by the coast in Aalesund, Norway when he saw the floating carcass of a humpbacked whale (*Megaptera novaeangliae*). He began to film the unusual sight when he spotted a huge serpentine animal 80 feet long and 5 feet wide.

The creature had a squarish dorsal crest (recalling the traditional lindorm's mane?) and shark-like jaws. It began to feed on the whale's carcass. The film was shown to the director of the Aalsund aquarium, who could not identify the creature. I have downloaded a copy of this film from the internet but it was so blurred that I could make nothing out whatsoever.

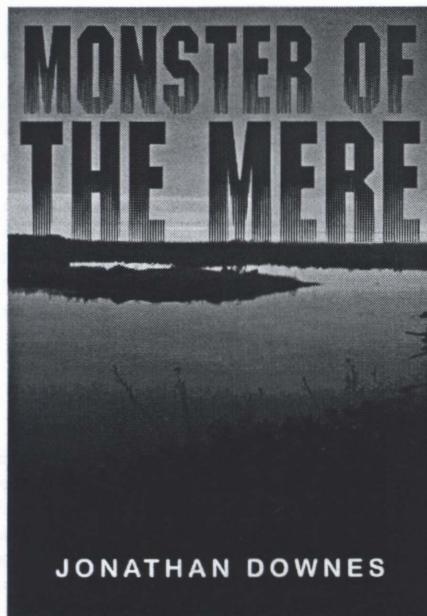
If nothing else, these extraordinary tales demonstrate one incontrovertible fact. Real or imaginary, the dragon continues to exercise a deep hold over the Scandinavian people that reaches back centuries.

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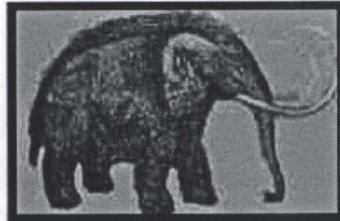


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The  
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**YEARBOOK**  
**2003**

Edited by  
Jonathan Downes and Richard Freeman

# *Animals & Men #30*

## INTERIM REPORT - KOTA MAMA 4

JULY - SEPTEMBER 2002

After nine weeks in the jungles of South America a British expedition has emerged with an impressive list of archaeological achievements and a number of successful community aid projects.

Working in the Andes foothills of Southern Bolivia, the 30 strong Kota Mama 4 Expedition investigated a mysterious 30 foot shaft amongst the ruins of a massive ancient ritual centre at Samaipata. *"I was believed to be a tunnel leading to a secret labyrinth underground, possibly used as a means of escape in times of trouble"* said expedition leader Colonel John Blashford-Snell. *"However, with the aid of an intrepid local geologist whom we lowered down the shaft, we found it to be a cleverly constructed well that had been sunk by the Incas or their forebears through red sandstone into a water bearing layer of conglomerate. These ancient people were good engineers".*

On the edge of the mountain range the explorers surveyed two huge Inca fortress towns built on the eastern frontier of their empire well before the Spanish conquest. Concentric defensive walls, still standing several metres high, surrounded the fortresses, now heavily overgrown. A small pyramid and large rectangular buildings used for rituals and as meeting places, were mapped and extraordinary pottery bowls probably used for ceremonial purposes were discovered beneath the floor by an entrance. The senior British Archaeologist, Bruce Mann, said, *"This is an unusual, but most fascinating find"*

In the mountains nearby the team discovered further evidence of the ancient occupation of this frontier. *"It is apparent that various cultures were here at different times and the sites probably changed hands,"* remarked John Blashford-Snell. *"This was most likely the wild east of the Inca*

In the Amboro area Major John Greenacre, Army Air Corps. led a reconnaissance party that found intriguing caves filled with human bones and a previously unknown wall over a metre high stretching through the forest. *"The area was littered with broken pottery"* he said, *"there must have been many people living here in ancient times".*

In September there were further finds. During the 2001 Kota Mama 3 expedition Aymara Indians led a small recce party to some ruins in a steep sided river valley and this year's expedition investigated them more fully. *"We found an extensive settlement with large well built stone buildings, a sophisticated water supply system, and roads for porters and pack animals running for several kilometres. The remains of a big house and a cemetery containing some large tombs were also discovered. Blocks of stone weighing many tons indicate that the early inhabitants were probably Inca but Spanish colonists had built on top of the site. An enormous effort was put into the construction of this place but the purpose is a mystery. It might have been to mine gold or collect quinine or rubber. However there are no records of this settlement locally. "It seems to be a forgotten town that was occupied up to 150 years ago,"* said Bruce Mann. Research into its origins is continuing.

Later, moving along tributaries of the Amazon in local Indian's long mahogany boats, flying the Bolivian flag and the Red Ensign, the Archaeologists found burial mounds being eroded by the rivers and streams. *"Pottery funerary urns up to 80 cms tall were tumbling from the bank"* said American Osteo-Archaeologist Maria Mason, *"Grave goods to help the dead in the after life had been buried with them. Amongst the bones we found bead and shell necklaces".* At a thousand year old site the bones of a man who had been around six feet were discovered. He would have been a giant amongst the much shorter Tacana Indians who live there today. By examining the teeth in the skull, Forensic Dentist Paul Liddiard, concluded he was remarkably healthy. Although there are legends of a race of giants living in this area it is too early to tell from the single specimen if this is correct. He was in far better dental health than the modern population. Some of the pots buried with the dead were found complete and sealed up with clay. These have been brought to Britain by Bruce Mann for detailed examination and an analysis of the contents.

# Animals & Men #30

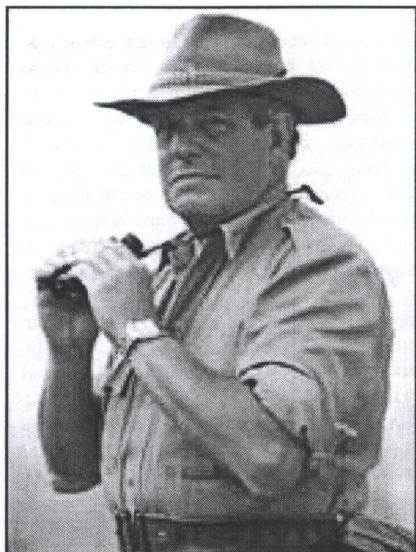
All the usual hazards made life trying for the explorers. Tarantulas, hornets, bees, sand flies and mosquitoes were a constant problem. Many of the team were literally covered in bites. Snakes, including the deadly Coral variety were encountered frequently. The weather varied from gale force winds and bitter cold in the early days to blazing heat (up to 42°C) in September. Torrential rain caused the Rio Beni to rise suddenly and several of the team had to be rescued after being swept off their feet whilst crossing a flooded creek.

Wherever the expedition worked they gave assistance to the local people. Paul Liddiard extracted some 560 teeth from Indians who eat excessive amounts of sugar cane. The team's doctors and nurse gave much help to local clinics and the community aid officer Shirley Critchley took in a pile of books for the local schools. Shirley and Spanish speaker Mike Brennan are now producing a simple guidebook to the northern area to boost the economy by encouraging hardy travellers to visit this wilderness. Members of the Scientific Exploration Society which organised the venture, collected funds for the Children's Hospital in La Paz. One patient who thanked them was a little girl who had lost both feet to frostbite whilst walking to safety in a snow storm in the Andes. Together with two younger children she had been caught in the blizzard. The two children with her froze to death.

British Biologist Guy Negretti was able to study the wildlife of this incredibly varied terrain and encourage conservation. Along the Rio Beni masses of young caiman could be seen at night and even handled - with care. Lumbersome capybara, the world's largest rodents, jaguarundi and other jungle cats were also sighted and the bird life was prolific. Flesh-eating piranha were common in the lakes. To move on the water the expedition used dug out canoes and two long mahogany boats owned by local Indians, who shot the rapids with great skill. Elsewhere donkeys, mules and pack horses carried the group's stores to the remote sites. These were the special responsibility of accountant Tom Bean, who also doubled as a vet.

The expedition has now returned to Britain where Colonel John Blashford-Snell said "*It has been a most successful project carried out by a team aged*

*18 to 70, under very challenging conditions and I trust it has done much to help the fauna, flora and people of Bolivia. The Bolivian Institute of Archaeology has asked us to return and we hope to continue to assist here in future. As usual, we seem to have uncovered more mysteries than those we have solved."*



## WAI WAI EXPEDITION

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER  
2002

## INTERIM REPORT

A centre for research and eco-tourism has been established for the first time in a remote area of tropical rain forest deep in Guyana.

A 23 strong international team from the Scientific Exploration Society have spent up to 5 weeks creating the centre at Akotopomo on the upper reaches of the

# *Animals & Men #30*

Essequibo river. Working with the Wai Wai, a tribe of Amerindians, known as "The Children of the Forest", the team built traditional style accommodation for up to 10 persons and an ethno-museum. The Wai Wai, who are closely protected by the Guyana government, will accept up to 140 visitors and scientific researchers per year.

The idea to build the centre came from the Wai Wai, who lived in relative isolation as hunter gathers enjoying a symbiotic relationship with the forest. Indeed they have proved to be natural conservationists. However in order to further educate their children and purchase medical supplies to cure malaria and other health hazards, introduced by illegal miners, they must become self-sustaining. They believe the Research Centre at Akotopomo will provide an income for this purpose.

The proposal was put to the explorer, Colonel John Blashford-Snell, Chairman of the Scientific Exploration Society, when he delivered a grand piano to the tribe in 2000. This splendid instrument, donated by Millennium Copthorne Hotels PLC and flown to Guyana by BIWIA, now stands proudly in the community's church.

Major General Joe Singh, the Executive Director of Conservation International in Guyana, and a blood brother of the Wai Wai, supported the project and in November work began at the site some 350 miles from the coast. Ten builders and conservationists backed by the States of Jersey's Overseas Aid Dept joined the expedition, which also included 3 professional piano tuners.

Amazingly the jungle heat and humidity had not caused too much deterioration to the 70 year old piano. A concert was recorded with a view to making a CD to raise funds to further assist the Wai Wai. An electronic keyboard, powered by a small electric generator was taken to the tribe on this trip and has enhanced their musical performances. However, in the long-term, Colonel John Blashford-Snell hopes to produce a simple treadmill powered generator to avoid the need for costly petrol being flown in. Wai Wai Chief Paul Chekama has suggested that their choir can operate this to power the keyboard.

Conservationists in the team assessed the wildlife and flora of the area. There were many meetings with packs of "water dogs" or giant otters that can grow to 8 feet in length. These fearless creatures would come charging towards the explorer's boats, barking in defiance. The Amerindians imitate their eerie cries and some exciting exchanges were filmed. Amongst the many snakes encountered were the highly venomous coral variety and an anaconda was trapped in a fisherman's net at the expedition's bath place. With some difficulty it was cut free by the team.

The bird life was especially prolific. The magnificent Harpy Eagle that feeds on monkeys and the extraordinary Cock of the Rocks, that performs an intricate mating dance on the ground, were seen.

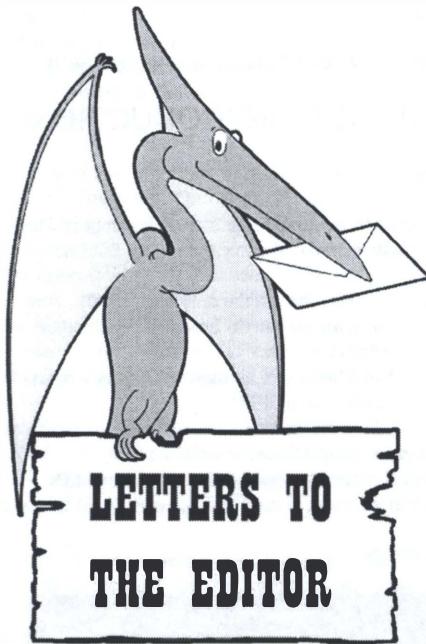
The Guyana Government is now working with Conservation International on a plan to set up a protected area, roughly the size of Wales that will cover the Wai Wai territory. Major General Joe Singh said of the Research Centre and the Ethno-Museum *"This is a very progressive move to assist the Wai Wai in displaying the strength of their tradition and motivating them to sustain their infrastructure. We are deeply grateful to the Scientific Exploration Society for this magnificent and timely support".*

The Wai Wai has many secret remedies that they extract from jungle plants but one of the most mysterious is an oil made from palm nuts. Regular use is alleged to prevent hair turning grey and indeed there are no grey haired Wai Wai. As a parting gift they presented Colonel John Blashford-Snell with a pot of this secret preparation. *"It's a bit late for me" he said "but I'll have it analysed - it could help to sustain this remarkable tribe".*

The Centre for Fortean Zoology would like to congratulate their life president on such sterling work.

Reading these two expedition reports only serve to underline – if any such endorsement was necessary – why John Blashford-Snell was the top of a shortlist of one for the job!

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The Editor and his band of merry men welcome an exchange of correspondence on any subject of interest to readers of this magazine. We reserve the right to edit letters and would like to stress that opinions voiced are those of the individual correspondent rather than being necessarily those of the editorial team or the Centre for Fortean Zoology. Every attempt is made not to infringe anyone's moral rights or copyright, and we apologise if we have unwittingly done so.

## SIX SIX SIXTIES

Dear Jon,

Just thought I'd let you guys know that last night I had another close encounter with an exotic cat!! Hey, I must be doing something right, that's five now, ha!

Saw something on the horizon about 200 yards away, at 8:45pm. Myself and another witness raised a lamp-beam to get the eye-reflection but it slinked off into hedgerow. From there, we stepped into the

hedgerow, trying to determine how the cat would act, would it go across the field to our left or continue its route. We took the first option, and saw it on the horizon about 130 yards away. We caught it in the beam, low arch to the back, strolling with pace, keeping a distance from us. We tried to approach, got within about 80 yards, when it stopped, looked at us then loped away, showing a longish tail. It then cut across an open field where we caught its eyes about 200 yards away then it was gone.

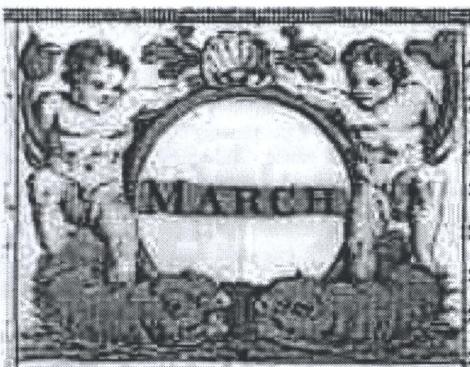
When I first saw the animal walking, its hind quarters almost 'bobbed' as it walked. It was Puma colour but didn't appear as big or as muscular and what really threw a spanner in the works was the fact that in the area Black Leopard and Lynx (which I saw) exist but no reports of this 'thing'!!

Neil Arnold,  
Kent

## BLOOD ON THE FLOOR

Dear Jon,

The illustration may be one of the earliest examples of a tatzelwurm.



It is taken from Robert Furber's March edition of *Twelve Months of Flowers*, 1730. It depicts two cherub-like beings standing on either two fish, two caterpillars, or could it be, two tatzelwurms?

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The two key factors ruling out the tatzelwurm possibility is that the creatures shown do not have stubby legs, nor do they come from Switzerland or Austria, but Kensington.

Richard Muirhead,  
Macclesfield.

EDITOR'S COMMENT: Thanks for the picture, Richard. It is certainly unusual, but after much deliberation we feel that these are stylised pictures of dolphins drawn by someone with more imagination than zoological knowledge.

Compare it with this drawing "Arion astride a Dolphin" by J.A.Muller (1571-1628).



## ASSUME POWER FOCUS

You Bastard -

Here's me and Paul Cropper busting our arses for 25 years trying to spot a yowie - and you stroll out into some little English wood and trip right over one! The Cosmic Prankster must be pissing himself.

I just posted off a packet of Naga stories to Richard - stuff I've had in my files since 1980. (I saw & enjoyed his story in FT) I enclosed a few assorted CZ clips for you - nothing too exciting.

Our yowie book is coming along & should be finished sometime this year. We'll send you some excerpts soon.

Cheers,

Tony Healy  
Australia.

EDITOR'S COMMENT: Hahahahahahaha!!!

## INDUSTRIAL INTRODUCTION

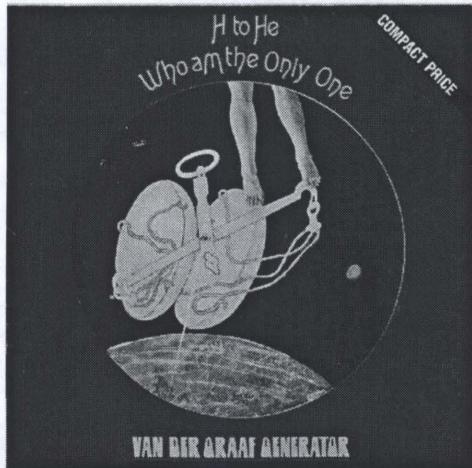
Dear CFZ,

Anyone apart from me spot the three references to *Van der Graaf Generator* in the latest *Animals & Men*?

1. H to He who am the only one (1970)
2. The least we can do is wave to each other (1969)
3. 3. A Plague of Lighthouse Keepers – from *Pawn Hearts* (1971)

As you can see your references were not in chronological order. I happen to own the above LPs and many more, most in mint condition...

Thomas Brophy,  
Eire



EDITOR'S COMMENT: Congratulations Thomas. You have won yourself a free year's subscription to the magazine. Being the awkward buggers we are we have run a competition in each issue without telling anyone that it was there. Each issue the letters page features song titles from

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some refugee from our record collection. Whoever is first to tell us who it is each issue gets a free 4-issue sub...

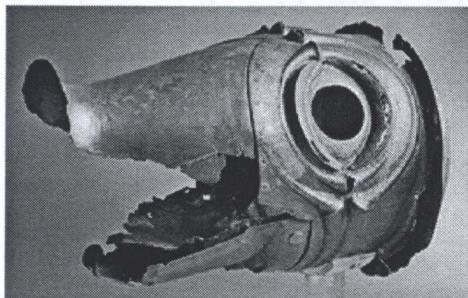
## WE HATE YOU (LITTLE GIRLS)

Dear Ed,

What follows is a possible explanation for some lake monster myths. Towards the end of the last Millennium archaeologists discovered the remains of a Pictish battle horn. The Picts were the dominant tribe in Scotland. They were both highly cultured in metalworking, stonemasonry and totally ferocious (hence Hadrian's Wall). The Roman legions compromised with a process of containment as the Picts were never conquered, unlike the southern Iceni.

The battle horn was eight feet long – the trumpet end was in the shape of a boar's head and was called a carnyx. When played, the boar's tongue resonated and rattled with air pressure. The carnyx was made of bronze and carried in a leather harness.

All this is common knowledge. What wasn't previously known was its use in battle. According to Roman historian Vinius, the Picts would attack the foe who usually camped near a body of water. Behind them, the enemy would see a kelpie or water horse approaching the shore making unearthly noises through the mist. The effect on a superstitious people can be imagined. It is unlikely that they would have guessed that a large lunged Pict, breathing through the carnyx was wading towards them.



A reproduction has been created and after lengthy twiddling some extremely off effects can be produced. As a precursor to the Highland war pipes the carnyx is surely the earliest example of fortean musicology.

NB. I would be grateful if you could restrain Richard from any addendums involving phallic gaelic (sic), pig's whistles, or any references to blowing in any context.

Thank you kindly,

Hugh Jape,  
Scotland.

RICHARD'S COMMENT: Mmmmmm I can just imagine all those Scotsmen going into battle clutching their pipes..

## HAMBURGER LADY

Dear Jonathan,

Many thanks for the latest *Animals & Men*, which I received upon my return from Bolivia. Alas we saw no anacondas or giant sloths. However, there were plenty of stories of large snakes being seen by Indian hunters. I have enclosed a copy of our interim report.

You may be interested in the discovery of the "Giant" on the Rio Beni. Although one specimen does not mean that there was a race of them there are legends of a race of very tall people (ie over six foot), coming into this area over a thousand years ago. We have a new book that I have written for the Scientific Exploration Society coming out later this month.

Best wishes

John Blashford-Snell,  
Dorset.

EDITOR'S COMMENT: Of course we will review it. We are looking forward to it. On a lighter note, Richard has pointed out that if someone discovered a new mountain by the river that the Colonel mentions, it would have to be called the Beni Hill!

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## 20 JAZZ FUNK GREATS

Dear Jon,

Re. Patty Print Prize.

The obvious answer is Johnny Vegas.

Sorted!

The capercaillie (Gaelic for 'horse of the woods' due to its call), is under threat from more than damp woods. If lucky enough to evade a burgeoning mink population, the ongoing timber clearance and traffic hazards a high proportion fly into two metre high deer fences and break their necks as if these didn't exist in Sweden where they were introduced. They have no folk memory of "another fine mesh you've got me into".

I would tend to agree that giving baboons E is a less than sensible idea. Back in the 1930s failing lotharios were given gonad transplants by Serge Romanoff for big bucks. The equation was simple – one baboon could re-equip two human males.

The thought of a hamadryas on full heat full of Es salsaing down at Stringfellow's is not a pretty one.

There is another candidate for the white ABC from Cardrona – a raccoon dog. Of course it would have had to have made it from Germany and be an albino but apart from such minor inconsistencies – a pretty good bet I think.

The Mohave legend of Bigfoot exactly replicates the Dakota version of the Bighorn mountains. Both are sacred burial sites. Both require spirit guardians for the ancestors.

Re. The Northumberland BHM.

This is not an isolated case. There was a well publicised copy the week before. A brief perusal of the gutter press will confirm it was actually a disgraced politician out badger watching – an easy mistake to make.

Re. Your coastal sojourn to north Yorkshire.  
When did you ever have a *little* bit of a hangover?

In answer to your plea for fieldworkers I'm your man baby. I'm all up for doing something exciting in a field except, of course, for badger watching.

Yours,

Tom Anderson,  
Aberdeen.

**EDITOR'S COMMENT:** Thomas, dear boy. The accounts of my drinking have been greatly exaggerated – and anyway I can't handle the stuff like I used to, sadly.

As far as my appeal for fieldworkers is concerned. The CFZ will be "going on manoeuvres" during the last two weeks in July. There are several candidates for the location – at the moment it looks likely that we will be continuing our investigations into the British BHM phenomena – probably at Friston Park in Sussex. At the moment there are twelve CFZ operatives who have asked to be involved, but as always the more the merrier.

This will be a chance to do some serious fieldwork on the matter with the added bonus that in great contrast to our sojourn in Northumberland, it will be summer time and the weather will be (hopefully) somewhat more pleasant.

If any other members of the CFZ wish to join us please contact me at the editorial address. More details will be posted on our web site nearer the time.

I would be interested in more details of the human/baboon gonad transplants. How successful were they?

I would refer anyone interested in the subject to a comic strip in a particular back issue of VIZ which is also available to view on their web site. It involves a character called "Mickey" and his singular moped which ran on certain by-products of primate sexuality.....

# Animals & Men #30

## Magazines

We welcome an exchange with publications, which cover subjects of mutual interest

Because of lack of space we can only mention publications, which we have received during the last three months.

**British Columbia Scientific  
Cryptozoology Club,**  
3773 West 18th Avenue, Vancouver,  
B C, V6S 1B3, Canada

An interesting newsletter, which contains news, expedition reports and much of interest from this fine society.

'**DEAD OF NIGHT**', 156 Bolton Rd East,  
New Ferry, Merseyside, L62 4RY  
For years this has been our favourite paranormal publication. Though home made and photocopied it has a breadth of subject and high standards of writing that would put many professional publications to shame.

**TEMS News**, 115 Hollybush Lane,  
Hampton, Middx, TW12 8QY  
Lionel Beer publishes this newsletter of the Travel and Earth Mysteries Society. It is an amusing, and often fascinating miscellany of quasi fortean odds and sods and is highly recommended.

'**Fortean Times**', Box 2409,  
LONDON, NW5 4NP

One American magazine once described FT as the 'Grandaddy' of Fortean Publications. Whilst nitpickers would probably say that this honour should really go to *Fate* (published for over fifty years) or *Psychic News* (considerably longer), FT is now thirty years old. Good luck to Dave Sutton the new Editor.

**Essex Reptiles & Amphibians Society**  
Mrs V Clark, 6 Chestnut  
Way, Tiptree, Colchester, Essex, CO5  
ONX

The hobby of reptile keeping is becoming increasingly beleaguered these days. People like the

CFZ who have a collection of exotic reptiles are being pictured as inhuman monsters and it looks likely that the pastime will soon be forced into extinction. In this current political climate it is comforting to find a magazine like this which dispenses news, hints, veterinary advice and society information with humour and style.

### **Porcupine!**

Dept of Ecology & Biodiversity,  
University of Hong Kong, Pokfulam Road, Hong Kong

This, the journal of the Hong Kong and South China Biodiversity and Ecology survey has much of interest to the fortean zoologist as well as the conservationist. As noted before in these pages, Hong Kong is a valuable living laboratory and scarcely an issue of this magazine comes out without including some item of interest to members of the CFZ.

### **Eye**

24 Chesnut Ave, Queens Road, Hull, HU5 2RH

Although still in its early days this magazine of the new Ufology looks likely to be amongst the leading publications of its type in the UK

### **Project Red Book**

224, Bellhouse Rd, Firth Park, Sheffield, South Yorkshire, S5 6HT

This is one of the few *monthly* mags that we know of that are privately published and funded.

Covering UFOlogy with élan and flair and often from the Keelian viewpoint, we cannot praise this periodical highly enough.

### **Animal News**

3a Aspley Hill, Woburn Sands, Milton Keynes, Bucks. MK17 8NH

This is the journal of the National Association of Private Animal Keepers (NAPAK). We have supported them in their aims for many years, and have occasionally received their newsletter. Frankly, it was not up to much, though the aims of the association are worthy ones. In the past six months, however the journal has blossomed into the best magazine on animal husbandry that we have ever read. We cannot praise this highly enough and urge everyone even slightly interested in the subject to subscribe.



# THE SYCOPHANT

Deep in a cave beneath Loch Ness lives a strange figure who steals ideas from other magazines and then somehow makes them his own.

He keeps a jaundiced weather eye on the world of Fortean Zoology and occasionally emerges into the world of men to pour ridicule upon his unsuspecting victims...

## NOW WE UNDERSTAND EVERYTHING....

The importance of the board of consultants on the day to day running of the CFZ cannot be over-emphasised. Over the years we have built up a team of the great and the good of fortean zoology across the world, which is second to none.

However, over the years, whereas the bad behaviour of the main members of the CFZ Board has occasionally been open to errrrrm scrutiny (especially at events such as the LAPIS conference), everyone has assumed that the Board of Consultants is beyond reproach.

Perhaps this is the time to spill the beans on the unnamed consultant who telephones us so we can cheat in pub quizzes, or the equally unnamed consultant who drunkenly told me on the telephone one night that they were sexually attracted to Ian Duncan-Smith!

The mind boggles. Ho Ho Ho!

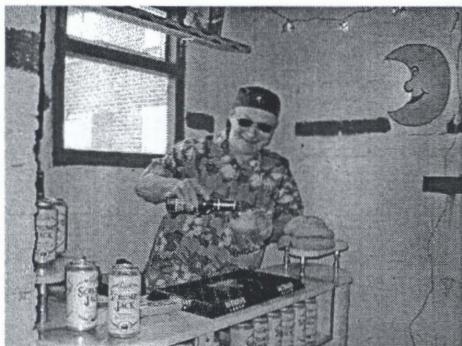
## A HOME FROM HOME

The events surrounding the CFZ expedition to Northumberland have been discussed in great detail. What I can now, exclusively reveal, is that our beloved Director gave an international

# *Animals & Men #30*

Press Conference whilst sitting in a Jamaican Theme Bar called "Winstons". So what?

It might make more sense when one comes to realise that "Winstons" was built by our Co. Durham rep David "Geordie Dave" Curtis in his garden shed.



It might also make a bit more sense of the events as a whole when I can exclusively reveal that not only were the entire CFZ posse sitting in the aforementioned garden shed at the time quaffing champagne, but that our beloved Director had an inflatable plastic dolphin on his head!

## THE THREE STOOGES

In the next issue there will be the long-awaited examination of Lloyd Pye's theories surrounding the 'Starchild Skull'.

The CFZ posse went to see Lloyd at Glastonbury during his recent UK lecture tour and Jon renewed their warm friendship which had started during his memorable trip to a UFO conference in Nevada a few years back.

We took a lot of photographs, but feel that this one deserves to be included here mainly because Lloyd described it as making them look like "The Three Stooges". (By the way – the 'Starchild Skull' is the one in the middle).



## THE WEIRD WEEKEND

After much deliberation the CFZ have announced the dates for this year's event – our fourth. Although it is the best lineup ever, we are sad to announce that because of changes in the licensing laws there will be no live music this year. Although it is disappointing, it is a mild relief for our beloved leader not to have to drag members of his musical ensemble out of rehab for long enough to rehearse enough songs in order to play live for a second year running.

Those of you who are sad about this will soon be able to buy a very low-fi CD recording of last year's reunion gig during which Jon managed to offend all the right-on student types in the audience and asked the lovely Gail-Nina to marry him in the middle of a twelve minute rendition of "Beautiful Mutant Monkey". 'Tis such moments of which legends are made.

**3rd - 5th OCTOBER 2003**  
COWICK BARTON, COWICK LANE, EXETER, DEVON.

# WEIRD WEEKEND

4th Annual Three Day Conference



Featuring  
Special  
Guests:-

**Colonel John  
Blashford-Snell OBE**

**Dr. Karl Shuker -  
Reg Presley**

**Also featuring:-**

**Tim Matthews - Steve Jones  
Adam Davies - Jon Downes - Richard Freeman  
Creaturama Workshop and more.....**

**Ticket Prices: -**

**Friday - £5 / Saturday - £10 / Sunday - £10 / Fri - Sun Inclusive - £15**



Tickets and event information is available by contacting:

**THE CENTRE FOR FORTEAN ZOOLOGY  
15 Holne Court, Exwick, Exeter, EX4 2NA**

Telephone 01392 424811. Alternatively visit our website at  
[www.stormpages.com/weirdweekend](http://www.stormpages.com/weirdweekend) or e-mail [jon@eclipse.co.uk](mailto:jon@eclipse.co.uk)

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**Typeset by the Ten Fathom Pirates**

*"two little monkeys, neither from Northampton. One called Marzipan, one called Frampton"*